

**‘Scottishness’, ‘Partnership’ and ‘Efficiency’:
Exploring Devolved School Management and
Local Government Reorganisation
within the Local Education System.**

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PART 2:

EMPIRICAL, CONCEPTUAL, THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL

ISSUES IN THE STUDY OF

DEVOLVED SCHOOL MANAGEMENT AND

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION.

CHAPTER 6
EXISTING RESEARCH CONCERNING
DEVOLVING SCHOOL MANAGEMENT,
THE ROLES AND RELATIONSHIPS OF SCHOOLS AND EAs

This chapter explores the existing empirical evidence concerning the practice of devolving school management and the perceptions of those involved. In Scotland, there are only two published studies researching and evaluating DSM (Adler *et al* 1996, 1997, Wilson *et al* 1995). These focus on the impact of DSM at school-level. Although there is brief consideration that DSM is affecting the EA and that Reorganisation will create further change, this is not a detailed focus. Therefore, the scope of the existing material has limitations. There is no Scottish research concerning the future role of EAs in detail or their relationships with schools. The DSM research is influenced by the wider research literature concerning English LMS, although it is argued a 'Scottish dimension' remains. Therefore, this chapter explores the range of details and debates emerging from the longer English experience of LMS and the issues of the roles and relationships of schools and EAs. This material is extensive and diverse, however there is an over-arching focus on LMS and educational reform as related to the creation of 'markets' and 'managerialism'. These trends link with the 'efficiency' discourse also, which may influence upon the Scottish experience. Hence, the final section considers research comparing the experience of devolving school management in England and Scotland. Issues emerging from the existing research are considered.

The Scottish Evidence for Devolved School Management (DSM)

Between January 1995 to September 1996, Adler *et al* (1996, 1997) conducted research into DSM in the secondary sector in Strathclyde, Lothian and Tayside Regions. An earlier shorter study of DSM in Tayside was conducted by Wilson *et al* (1995). Both studies are qualitative¹. There is a general similarity of findings between the two studies, however the former will be focussed on given the greater scope and scale of findings.

Adler *et al*'s (1996:1) project "had three principal aims", namely:

to gather the views of teachers and others of the effects of DSM on school decision- making, ethos, and teaching and learning;
to explore the consequences of DSM for staff ...and
to examine the involvement of School Boards with DSM. (*Ibid*).

During their research and in its reporting, Adler *et al* (*ibid*: 15) note:

Although the project did not set out explicitly to examine the effects of local government reorganisation on schools and School Boards, the administrative and financial pressures brought about by reorganisation nevertheless featured strongly in a number of interviews and at some of the later School Board observations.

The research is presented around three important topics: DSM and Schools; Teachers' Perceptions of DSM; and DSM and School Boards.

1. Devolved School Management and the School

Amongst teaching staff, it is the head teacher who is most affected by DSM (Adler *et al* 1996, 1997, Wilson *et al* 1995). Head teachers "broadly welcomed" DSM (Adler *et al* 1996:18). They liked the "increased flexibility and freedom at school level", the "ability to pursue school priorities", "to direct funds" to EA priorities also, and to have "more control over staffing appointments" (*ibid*: 18- 19). Nevertheless, there was concern about the "limited extent of control" and "autonomy" at school- level (*ibid*: 19), created by limitations on virement and carry- forward, plus general budget cuts. Head teachers were concerned there should be adequate and appropriate clerical and administrative support.

The head teacher's role was perceived to be changing and there were some concerns about workload. Head teachers were increasingly involved in "managerial issues, particularly financial matters" (*ibid*: 22). This was 'welcomed' more by some heads than others. Heads were keen to stress "their role as educational leaders" (Wilson *et al* 1995:12). However, they were increasingly involved with issues "external" to the school and on "external relations generally" (Adler *et al* 1996: 23). Nevertheless, unlike Government propositions and English experience, head teachers were not becoming predominantly market- like in their behaviour. Alder *et al* (*ibid*) explain:

it was not found that Heads were spending more time away in order to 'market' their school. While they were keen to ensure that their schools had 'good' images in the local community, with the possible exception of two Heads they did not set out to compete directly with neighbouring schools for pupils. In several schools, rather than identifying the financial benefits of having more pupils, Heads worried that an increased number would lead to overcrowding. Another possible explanation was a general reluctance... to compete with other schools for pupils.

An education 'market' was not extensive. Indeed, within schools, head teachers were perceived as becoming more 'bureaucratic' due to their managerial role.

The "administration and management of DSM" falls into three broad areas: firstly, "strategic decision- making, which was ultimately the responsibility of the Head"; secondly, "overseeing the delegated responsibilities" which was handled in varying ways but involved the head teacher and often a Depute and/ or Senior Management Team; thirdly, the "day- to- day administration" which was carried out by administrative assistants" (*ibid*: 25- 26). For other staff, their involvement in decision- making was severely limited. Although staff committees existed, these were "largely consultative" and "deferential to the Heads" (*ibid*: 29). The linkage of School Development Plans and DSM varied but was often under- developed.

Adler *et al* offer brief consideration of school/ EA relations, commenting:

It is difficult to separate the effects of DSM upon school- Authority relations from those resulting from other changes, especially in the light of local government reorganisation. (*Ibid*: 34).

However, there is limited consideration of this issue in the existing literatures. Rather concerns focus upon the EA's role in DSM, e.g. provision of training, I.T. and support. These provisions were variable and problematic but were hoped to be improving (Adler *et al* 1996, Wilson *et al* 1995). The EA was required to provide improved financial and other information to schools (Adler *et al* 1996). Some senior school staff believed DSM had created "an improvement in relations with their Authorities" (*ibid*: 38). While "there was less than complete satisfaction" with EA's

budget management, information and services, “few” interviewees “wished to see further delegation to schools” (*ibid*). Significantly: “Adopting self-governing status was not considered to be a realistic option in any of the schools”, as an “element of solidarity” between school and EA remained (*ibid*: 39).

However, Adler *et al* (*ibid*) suggest that teaching staff “had little of substance to say about the role of the EA” as they had little contact. Rather it was the Head Teacher - EA relationship that was pivotal. More generally, Wilson *et al* (1995:10) argue that staff had not “grasped the full meaning and significance” of the EA’s changed role to “strategic planning, enabling and quality assurance”. Rather staff complained about additional responsibilities and burdens at school-level. Some head teachers felt they were incapable of managing “the myriad of items that haven’t got specific instructions” and requiring advice from the EA (*ibid*). Unlike the propositions of an individualistic and market-like approach, a collective orientation and dependency relationship appears evident. However, it was believed the relationship would change further post-Reorganisation. Head teachers proposed that a “closer relationship” with the EAs would emerge, especially due to their smaller scale (Adler *et al* 1996:40). Nevertheless, there were concerns about “diminishing levels of support” from the EA to school, the capacity to “maintain the existing level of services”, effects on “school budgets and job security” created by Reorganisation (*ibid*). There was concern as to how DSM would operate and be supported post-Reorganisation.

2. Teachers’ Perception of Devolved School Management

Senior staff were “best informed”, while other teachers demonstrated “a general awareness of DSM but a lack of knowledge about detail” (*ibid*: 44). However, this was not perceived as senior management being deliberately “secretive” as information about DSM had been circulated (*ibid*). As with head teachers, DSM was generally “welcomed”, as it increased school level “flexibility” and ability to prioritise school needs (*ibid*: 45). Teachers appreciated the “more rapid and efficient handling of repairs and maintenance” and the ability to improve the classroom and school environment (*ibid*: 46). Teachers were becoming more cost-conscious. More generally, DSM was

perceived to be “superior to the English version”, especially due to the role of the head teacher (*ibid*).

The role and workload of teachers had not changed due to DSM. Rather it was curricular reform that was affecting teachers. The head teacher had “ultimate power” over DSM and was more affected (*ibid*: 47). Teachers appeared happy for the Head to have power but were concerned about increased time spent on financial and personnel matters, rather than ‘educational’ ones. Some teachers perceived changes in their relationship with the Head.

Within classrooms, the effect of DSM on teaching and learning is problematic to research (Wilson *et al* 1995). However, Adler *et al* (1996: 48) conclude:

the effects of DSM were seen as rather modest. Such influence as there was tended to be through its effect on accommodation and equipment rather than directly on curriculum and assessment.

Similarly, Wilson *et al* (1995:18) perceived impacts within three “broad categories: new equipment and teaching resources; minor improvement to property and staff and curriculum development activities”. Support for using non- EA suppliers was mixed. There were concerns about the capacity of the EAs post- Reorganisation to resource and provide staff development and the nature of the advisory service. This extended to a general concern about the future of EAs and education:

Some teachers saw DSM as part of a trend toward the reduction in the role of EAs and, if this were the case, there would be short- term consequences for staff development and for state education in the longer term. (*Ibid*: 51).

There were positive and negative linkages between DSM, Reorganisation and the nature of education.

3. The Role of the School Board

In policy, school boards were to have a “consultative role”, and in practice “DSM did not appear to have had a significant or easily identifiable effect” on boards (*ibid*: 59). There were concerns about the ability and representativeness of school boards, which created problems of legitimacy, credibility and knowledgeability. Time constraints

undermined school board members also. School boards were dependent on, deferential to, trusted and supported the head teacher and did not want to extend their own powers. Heads dominated the agenda setting and proceeding of meetings. They fulfilled their statutory obligations to inform and involve school boards in **financial decision-making**. However, boards tended to approve and endorse the Head's decisions with little discussion (*ibid*: 66). Similarly, head teachers and SMT had the capacity to dominate in the **appointment of staff**. Many teachers felt that school boards should not be involved in staffing selection. School boards did not become involved in school management, but did act as a support for the school and pressure group on the EA. This role was 'welcomed' by teachers and boards. A 'supportive' not managerial role was endorsed.

Boards were not emerging as powerful competitive 'consumer' bodies. They were aware that pupil numbers were important but "there was no evidence that any Board had put pressure on a school to 'market' itself more aggressively or to attract pupils from other schools." (*Ibid*: 67). Nevertheless, Boards were concerned that the school had a good image within the local community, hence issues "like discipline, uniforms and ways of publishing the achievements of the school" were discussed (*ibid*). However, overall, an education market was not emerging:

School Boards were as little enamoured of competition as most teachers were... they had not urged their schools to attract pupils at the expense of others... some parents had joined the Board specifically to resist the 'marketisation' of education and to oppose any attempts to seek self-governing status. (*Ibid*: 68).

This is perceived as counter to the Government's agenda and the English experience.

Conclusions from the Scottish Research

Both studies suggest that it is not possible to provide a thorough evaluation of DSM within the short period of its implementation and conduct of research. However, it is evident that changes are occurring at school-level, especially head teachers. Change may be occurring at EA-level also, although research is under-developed here. The policy of DSM has not realised all of its stated aims and some 'unintended'

consequences may be arising also. In order to develop DSM, a range of practical factors, e.g. adequate support and I.T. are necessary. However, due to “multiple innovations”, it is difficult to “disentangle” and evaluate “DSM effects” (Adler *et al* 1996: viii). Importantly, the impact of Reorganisation and budgetary changes will affect DSM and affect its nature. There is a need for further research into DSM and Reorganisation, especially at EA- level.

Both studies are aware of the English experience of devolving school management but suggest that Scotland is different. Adler *et al* (1996) suggest LMS is a more extreme and political policy, especially in combination with ERA. By contrast, the capacity for some EA discretion, the more ‘sensitive’ formula and devolution to the head teacher make Scottish DSM more appealing. The “DMR precedent” eased the transition to national DSM (*ibid*: 76). Fundamentally, a Scottish cultural dimension is perceived as inherent:

It is plausible that the relatively consensual, though not conflict- free, Scottish circumstances assisted the implementation of DSM. (*Ibid*: 75).

This is a relatively general proposition. It is possible that the policy, practice and researching of LMS have affected the Scottish experience but a distinctive dimension remains also. I turn to the greater range of the English material for further illumination.

The English Experience

There is a substantial and growing literature concerning devolving school management in England & Wales. Local experimentation began during the 1950s and was most developed in Cambridgeshire and Solihull during the 1980s (Downes 1988, Hill 1989). By the 1980s, academics advocated the benefits of improving school ‘financial management’ (Knight 1983, 1993) and devolution (Caldwell & Spinks 1988, 1992). Caldwell and Spinks’ vision of the ‘self- managing’ school has been promoted and popular. Based on economic, political, organisational and ‘school effectiveness’ criteria, the self- managing school is proposed as the most appropriate to the values, nature and organisation of schools (Caldwell & Spinks 1988). However, the vision of an allegedly universal model of ‘self- managing’ schools has received criticism due to its inadequate methodological basis, conceptual weaknesses, practicability and

assumed a- political nature (Angus 1993, Demaine 1993, Smyth 1993, Walford 1993). Angus (1993:22) argues “The world of *The Self- Managing School* is an unreal world”, “remote” from consideration of social and economic issues, the exercise of power and importantly the capacity to adopt the rhetoric of ‘self- managing schools’ for political means. The capacity to re- interpret and politicise school reform was demonstrated by the Conservatives’ approach to LMS contained within ERA.

The Policy and Research concerning Local Management of Schools (LMS)

In 1987, the Department of Education and Science (DES) published a consultation paper proposing financial delegation and commissioned Coopers & Lybrand to produce an independent report and advice on such a policy. LMS was legislated in 1988 and has since been developed (DES 1991). The essential principle of LMS is the delegation of powers over school budget and staffing to the governing body, who have the choice to delegate this to the head teacher. The delegation of finance is governed by the use of formula funding which combines adherence to Central Government rules with some scope for LEA variation (see appendix D). Under the 1988 Act, all secondary and primary schools and colleges with pupil rolls over 200 were to become LMS; smaller primaries and special schools could be included at the discretion of the LEA. All LEAs were to submit schemes for LMS to the Secretary of State and, following his approval, pilot LMS was to begin in 1990 with full implementation by 1993, except in inner London by 1995 (Levacic 1989,1995).

The literature and practices reported concerning LMS are characterised by great variation. The existence of some flexibility for LEAs to devise their own schemes ensured that local variations would exist (Audit Commission 1988, Lee 1990). In practice, variations within and between LEAs have emerged (Edwards & Baker 1990, Bullock & Thomas 1997, Wallace 1993). In schools generally variations exist, in particular between primary and secondary, scales of school, and the experience of different staff within the same school (Arnott *et al* 1993b, Ball 1993, Bowe & Ball 1992, Bullock & Thomas 1997, Busher & Saran 1993, DFE, 1992b, Huckman 1995, Levacic 1995, Wallace 1993). All of this amounts to a vast diversity of experience and perception, which extends and alters over time. Furthermore, this is compounded by

the differing foci, values and findings of the many researchers concerned with LMS. A universal model of LMS cannot be posited.

Nevertheless, there are common themes that are inherent in the policy, influence the practice and are either explicit or implicit in the analysis of LMS. The two most salient are the exploration of LMS as related to the promotion of values and practices associated with 'market' and 'management'. Hence, my discussion of the research literature will start from consideration of the findings and analysis of these two issues. I will explore the proposed implications for the roles of schools and for EAs, plus the relationships between these bodies. It is necessary to widen the scope of analysis to consideration of not only educational changes but also those affecting local government.

LMS and the 'Market' in Education

Some critics view LMS within the wider context of ERA and the apparent promotion of market forces (Chitty 1989, Flude & Hammer 1990, Leonard 1988, Meredith 1992, Ranson 1990, Rao 1990, Sallis 1988, Simon 1988, Wallace 1990), others focus specifically on the nature of LMS in the 'education market' (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Cave & Wilkinson 1990, Davies & Ellison 1992, Lee 1990, Levacic 1989, 1992, 1995, Maden 1992, Ranson & Thomas 1989, Thomas 1990, Thomas & Bullock 1994, Thomas *et al* 1989). There is a general view that LMS is an integral element in the drive to an 'education market' which is based on political objectives associated with the New Right influencing the Conservative Government (Bash & Coulby 1989, Bowe & Ball 1992, Chitty 1989, Flude & Hammer 1990, Levacic 1995, Simon 1988). Some critics who agree with the general notion of devolving school management are hostile to the specific nature of LMS (Haviland 1988, Murphy 1992, Thomas & Bullock 1994, Williams 1995).

The Conservative Government believed that the introduction of market forces would improve the quality of the education system (Bowe & Ball 1992, Bullock & Thomas 1997, Busher & Saran 1993, Davies & Ellison 1992, Levacic, 1995). Producers (teachers and LEA Officers) will become more responsive to consumer (parental)

choice and to pursuing the most efficient and appropriate use of resources and determination of product. Through individual choice, a better collective order will occur. Such an approach is derived from neo-liberal thinking. Davies & Ellison explain for education:

LMS is seen as a market mechanism for improving schools, as they will be forced to relate parental choice, funding and educational performance in a very direct way, in a "quality education". It has a two-pronged strategy. First, vastly enhanced school-level control of financial resources should enable educators to determine the best mix of resources to deliver quality education and, second, the market will provide rewards or punishments for schools according to whether or not they achieve adequate performance. (Davies & Ellison 1992:79).

Bowe & Ball (1992:65- 66) explain that such a prescription is not based purely on a vision of the future, but also on a condemnation of the past:

there is in New Right thinking, a strong belief that a State-run educational system produces systemic dependency (schools dependent upon 'the system'), complacency (an unresponsiveness to the demands of society), bureaucracy (initiatives for change hampered by 'red tape') and 'protectionism' (educational quality judged by the 'professionals', whose central concerns may not be in the national or the 'consumers' interests). The argument then follows that such tendencies can only be eradicated if spending is devolved to schools as individual enterprises required to respond to some form of educational market. For the Government, the essence of LMS is buried within the move to enter a new era of self-help, entrepreneurialism, cost-effectiveness and consumerism.

The form of LMS connects to political not educational values (Bowe & Ball 1992, Bullock & Thomas 1997, Levacic 1995).

Specific economic and organisational arguments have been selected to popularise political values and propositions for the reform of the education system. Hence, the nature of the education system is transformed by the promotion of the market, which generates a different value context (Ball 1993, Levacic 1995). Although the drive towards the delegation of management to schools has gained international momentum

as a 'mega- trend' (Caldwell & Spinks 1992), its linkage to market models in England & Wales is distinctive (Bullock & Thomas 1997) and creating "a revolutionary model" (Davies & Ellison 1992:79). Levacic (1995) argues LMS is contrary to international developments where devolving school management is a means for teacher empowerment. LMS is considered 'deprofessionalism' at school- level (Ball 1993, Bullock & Thomas 1997, Davies & Ellison 1992, Thomas 1990, Wallace 1993) and represents a continuing attempt to weaken the role of the LEA (Davies & Ellison 1992, Esp 1989, Levacic 1995, Wallace 1993, Williams 1995). LMS is based upon political principles and perceived outcomes favouring 'consumer power' over that of 'producer capture'.

Levacic (1995:24) argues that the vision of a 'market' in education being promoted by the Government "is a direct application of the market model from the private sector". However, due to 'market failure' and 'market imperfections' in the education system (Bullock & Thomas 1997), " a simple market model is far from adequate" (Wallace 1993:12) and the depiction of such is "putative" (Busher & Saran 1993:180). The values, conditions and practices of a 'commercial market' model cannot be imposed upon a 'social market' (Bowe & Ball 1992:34). Hence, it is proposed that a 'quasi-market' has been created in education (Bartlett *et al* 1994, Bowe & Ball 1992, Bullock & Thomas 1997, LeGrand & Bartlett 1993, Levacic 1995). In 'quasi' markets the profit motive may be absent (LeGrand 1990) and hierarchical regulation (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Levacic 1995), sometimes interpreted as control (Bowe & Ball 1992), remains important. Nevertheless, some of the criticisms of an education 'market' remain, e.g. lack of 'equity' and 'educational' value (Arnott *et al* 1993b, Ball 1993, Bowe & Ball 1992, Bullock & Thomas 1997, Busher & Saran 1993, Levacic 1989,1992,1995, Wallace 1993)².

Bowe & Ball (1992) argue that the 'incoherence' in the notion of a 'quasi- market' will generate difficulties when it comes to operating such a scheme. Evidence suggests that an 'education market' per se has not been created as a complex set of relationships evolving around notions of 'markets, hierarchies and networks' exists (Levacic 1992,1995, Thompson *et al* 1991). A simple choice between market or collective state

provision ignores the reality of a 'mixed economy' in education (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Thomas & Bullock 1994). Levacic (1992) adopts the phrase 'internal market' to demonstrate how variable relationships are emerging, e.g. as concerns the LEA the external environment may be characterised as a 'market', but internal co-ordination is achieved through hierarchy. At the school level, the experience is not purely of competitive market forces. Evidence indicates that schools may co-operate, collaborate and network, as well as compete (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Keast 1992a, b, Levacic 1995, Ranson & Tomlinson 1994). As Levacic (1995) notes co-operation exists even in private markets, therefore the existence of one does not negate the other. Nevertheless, a pure and universally competitive market does not exist in education. Hence, the notion of an 'education market' must be treated with caution and criticism both in terms of its theoretical and conceptual adequacy and its empirical validity.

This is not to argue that the notion of an 'education market' has not been pervasive in terms of the political principles underpinning LMS and in the analysis of the associated policy and practice. It is necessary to consider the elements of LMS and its association with other reforms which have combined to create what Thomas & Bullock (1994:41) define as the "*pupil- as- voucher system*", involving the combined implications of: financial delegation; formula funding; staffing delegation; open enrolment; and performance indicators, as creating a market- like mechanism (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Davies & Ellison 1992, Thomas 1990, Thomas *et al* 1989, Ranson & Thomas 1989).

Financial Delegation

The devolution of finances which "gives schools more day- to- day control over their budgets" (Thomas 1990:74) is the defining feature of LMS:

The theory is that it allows those closest to the school to see its needs and determine priorities... the budgetary process can focus on meeting them in the most appropriate way. Thus, the organization can determine spending according to localized perceptions, whereas in the past, the more remotely sited LEA decided on most areas and levels of expenditure. (Davies & Ellison 1992: 76).

Some writers agree that local decision making is preferable to the 'unresponsive' and 'remote' LEA (Levacic 1995), while others claim that such logic rest upon an "uncertain premise" (Thomas 1990:74).

Schools gain 'flexibility' in their control of the budget (Thomas 1990, Williams 1995) especially through potential for virement and carry- forward (Davies & Ellison 1992). LMS involves allowing schools to authorise payments but not to manage cash, except when cheque- book systems are developed (Bullock & Thomas 1997). Flexibility is to be created as "each school will have freedom to acquire supplies and services from any source rather than being constrained by LEA central purchasing arrangements." (Davies & Ellison 1992:77). Although it is possible that schools will retain LEA supplies, services and support. The levels of funding held at Central Government and LEA level; in addition, those funds targeted for specific purposes, constrain the 'freedom' of the school (Thomas 1990). Bowe & Ball (1992:28- 29) forewarn that: "a degree of self- delusion in the notion that budgetary control is somehow liberating", due to practical limitations on the school. Fundamentally, schools must adhere to legislation (Bullock & Thomas 1997).

Formula Funding

Financial delegation occurs in accordance with centrally 'prescribed' and locally varied formula. This heralds a new practice and nature for school funding. Thomas (1990) argues that a shift in style and practice will occur as budgetary decision making will be "explicit and public in nature" (*ibid*: 75) and a different "cast of characters" will be involved, as consultation with head teachers and governing bodies "is a change which will reduce the discretion which education officers have often had in allocating resources to schools." (*ibid*: 76). This 'empowers' schools, yet holds them and LEAs to account also. Formulas are to be explicit, simple and relate to objective calculations (Lee 1990).

The transition from historical budgets to mathematical formula is far from straightforward (Huckman 1995, McAllister & Connolley 1990, Thomas 1990). Research indicates that some schools will gain more than others, i.e. 'winners and

losers' (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Davies & Ellison 1992, Lee 1990). Thomas (1990:76) argues that "apparently remote funding formula are not neutral in their effects." formulae are *weighted*. An Age- Weighted Pupil Unit formula determines 80% of the school budget. Bullock & Thomas's (1997) research reveals that differences between funding of pupils of different ages within LEAs, and differences between LEAs in funding pupils of the same age, require greater justification. The AWPU is detrimental to primaries and small schools (Bullock & Thomas 1997, DfE 1992b, Lee 1990, Levacic, 1995). There are problems with adhering to 'simple' and 'objective' formula (Lee 1990). As Peat Marwick McLintock (1988, C4) forewarned, potentially "the simpler the formula the rougher the justice". Such problems and foreboding are particularly applicable to analysis of the formula funding for staffing. This formula is derived on the basis of providing schools with average salary costs but they have to pay actual staff costs, the 'average- in, actual- out' principle. This creates problems for schools which are relatively over- staffed, have an older staff or a greater proportion of promoted posts. The impact on the schools budget and teachers employment has been deemed "unpalatable" (Williams 1995:15). Such an approach retains the Governments belief in imposing cash limits (Bullock & Thomas 1997) and in placing teachers within the market place (Thomas 1990).

Staffing Delegation

Governing bodies gain powers over the recruitment, appointment, salary and dismissal of staff (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Thomas 1990). However, the LEA remains the legal employer of teachers, creating a split and shift in the employment relationship (Haviland 1988). The scope for school- level discretion is curtailed by the existence of statutorily specified national terms and conditions, plus the demands of the national curriculum (Bullock & Thomas 1997). Nevertheless, in selecting candidates, schools have relative freedom and the capacity to vary the classroom implications as: "There are no regulations on maximum size of class, about the overall pupil- teacher ratio or the mix of teaching and non- teaching staff employed at the school site" (*ibid*). It is contentious whether the predominantly 'lay' governing body should have such substantial powers vested in them. Head teachers dislike this system (Bullock & Thomas 1997). Job losses and cheaper staff were predicted (Bullock & Thomas 1997,

Levacic 1995, Ranson & Thomas 1989, Williams 1995). Teachers are perceiving themselves in terms of cost, generating concerns about cost of illness, the threat of 'cheaper' staff, redundancy and reduced hours, all of which amounted to a considerable feeling of job insecurity (Bullock & Thomas 1997). Empirical evidence suggests that such concerns have some foundations, although perhaps have been exaggerated (Bullock & Thomas 1997, DfEb 1992, Levacic 1995)³ In the 1993 questionnaire responses, 65% of primary heads and 48% of secondary heads agreed that salary implications were a consideration in the appointment of staff (Bullock & Thomas 1997: 88- 89).⁴ LMS has placed values of cost- effectiveness over teacher security and arguably to the detriment of the classroom experience.

Critics argue that LMS has not generated the Government's aims of improving the quality of education. The linkage between formula- funding and improved educational quality and standards remains unproven (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Levacic 1995, Maden 1992). Evidence concerning the experience of teachers may suggest the contrary. Even if one were to assume that LMS was primarily a market mechanism concerned with promoting individualism over collective needs, problems arise. LMS is not a pure market. The promotion of 'local flexibility' is undermined by the 'top-down' approach to formula funding (Haviland 1988). In the quest for simple, objective and universal formula, there is "no concern with the individual" (Lee 1990:30). Nevertheless, the belief in market forces generating improved education was fundamental and rested on the combination of LMS with other reforms.

Open Enrolment

Levacic (1995:9) explains:

The connection between age- weighted pupil funding and more open enrolment is the linchpin of the new quasi- market created by formula funding, as this links parental preference for a school directly with its ability to maintain its finances and staffing.

Schools must enrol pupils up to their physical capacity, rather than the LEA setting lower admission limits which protect 'failing' schools or serve a redistributive function (Davies & Ellison 1992, Thomas 1990). Davies & Ellison (1992:78) link this to:

the idea of the free market economy in which successful schools will recruit and flourish while unsuccessful ones will flounder.

Maden (1992) laments the fact that such a policy 'decouples' the partnership of parents and teachers redefining them as contractors/ producers and clients/ customers.

The extent to which such 'market forces' can be 'managed' by the school is debatable. Bullock & Thomas (1997) suggest that in the definition of admissions procedures, little power over this criterion have been devolved. Levacic (1995) posits that OE is concerned with the external market, while LMS focuses on internal management. Bowe & Ball (1992) identify the combination of LMS and OE as being a drive to 'entrepreneurial schools'. The extent to which such management for market forces in education is possible, pursued or desirable is dubious (Bowe & Ball 1992, Bullock & Thomas 1997, Levacic 1995). The education 'market' of pupil places is not infinite. Head teachers perceive the factor most commonly attributed with past changes as demography (Bullock & Thomas 1997). There are considerable fluctuations in schools rolls making forward planning and management of education problematic (*ibid*). While Bullock & Thomas (1997:193) comment that "there can be no doubt that competition for pupils is very real for *some* schools", it is of little or no importance to a substantial and increasing proportion of schools⁵. The emergence of schools agreeing admissions criteria within their locality, i.e. in co- operation not competition, was noted (*ibid*). Schools do not necessarily pursue 'maximum' capacity:

our case study schools actually developed and operated with a fairly well worked out sense of their 'optimum' or 'preferred' size. (Bowe & Ball 1992:46).

Bowe & Ball (1992) suggest that 'popularity' can have 'drawbacks' which may make the school 'unpopular' (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Levacic 1995)⁶. Furthermore, for choice to operate surplus places must be available, but the preservation of these may be economically inefficient (Levacic 1995). There is a tension between the need for LEA rationalisation and individualised parental choice.

That school closure is possible and pupil- funding is important suggests that 'market pressure' may have been generated. Bullock & Thomas's (1997:187) research

indicates how relatively small changes in pupil roll can have a significant impact on the school budget⁷. That some schools do not compete may be attributed to practical factors, i.e. the location of the school (Bullock & Thomas 1997), or attitudinal factors, 'cultural resistance' (Bowe & Ball 1992). However, for schools where competition is necessary it has substantial consequences. Bowe & Ball (1992) argue there is not an 'education market', there are *markets* reflecting local circumstances and perceptions.

Performance Indicators

Customers (parents) require information to exercise choice; hence, "*performance indicators* are an essential element of the voucher system." (Thomas 1990:79). There is support for the principle of giving greater information but concern over the precise form this policy has taken (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Lee 1990, Thomas 1990). The use of quantifiable measures of 'raw output' is widely condemned as crude measures that do not reveal the complexity of the educational process (Haviland 1988, Levacic 1995, Thomas & Bullock 1994). Given the limitations of performance indicators as facilitating particularly informed choices by parents, one must question whether their prime use is as a means of ensuring accountability. Levacic (1995:13) indicates that the current performance indicators are mechanisms for "regulation" in the education 'market'. Ball (1993:77) argues they enable control in the form of "steering by the state". The education 'market' must be located in a process of both a decentralisation and centralisation.

The National Curriculum

Some commentators have viewed the inclusion of the national curriculum in ERA as a curious centralising force, in contrast to the decentralising thrust of the Act. Yet, Simon (1992) claims there is a unity in that the national curriculum provides central regulation and performance indicators facilitating an education 'market'. Bowe & Ball (1992) perceive the national curriculum and LMS as intrinsically linked and requiring combined analysis. The Government envisaged the National Curriculum and LMS as complementing each other:

Local management of schools is only one of a number of changes embodied in the ERA and intended to improve standards. Some of the measures directly

complement LMS such as the requirement on schools to produce development plans for the implementation of the National Curriculum... the National Curriculum itself and the associated cycle of assessment, which complement LMS indirectly by establishing a national framework within which schools are to be managed. (DfE 1992b: 8).

The proposed 'outcome' is improved quality and standards in education:

However, this will be the outcome, the government insists, only if schools are successful in securing intermediary objectives such as the delivery of the National Curriculum and greater efficiency in school management. (Lee 1990:4).

LMS and National Curriculum are combined 'means' to achieve educational 'ends'.

There is a perception that the purpose is to establish the framework and process of an 'education market'. Levacic (1995) denotes the National Curriculum as a regulatory mechanism. Bowe & Ball (1992:65) comment the linking of the National Curriculum as a performance indicator with judgements of 'cost- effectiveness' transforms education:

The educational process becomes the production process, teachers are producers, parents are consumers, knowledge becomes a commodity and the educated student the product, with a minimum specification... by the National Curriculum.

This is the market place conception involving de-professionalisation of educators and commodification of education. However, the linkage of LMS and National Curriculum serves further to indicate that a 'pure' education 'market' has not been achieved. Bullock & Thomas (1997) suggest the creation of a national curriculum and associated national testing creates a centralisation over these areas which limits the potential scope of decentralisation feasible within LMS to areas of finance plus human and physical resources. A pure market cannot exist when substantial aspects of the education 'process' are subject to centralised control.

The Paradox of LMS as Market Forces Combined with Centralisation?

Caution is required when defining LMS as the drive to market forces, as when wider changes are taken into account 'paradoxes' emerge:

The paradox of simultaneous centralisation and decentralisation apparent... decentralisation of control over resources can be viewed as consistent with the 'market' principle of decisions being centralised to small operating units and to individuals. Yet, the centralisation of control over the curriculum would appear to be contrary... and more consistent with the principles underlying planned economies. (Bullock & Thomas 1997:211- 212).

Furthermore, Busher & Saran (1993:188) argue that a 'paradox' in practice will emerge as the implementation of the National Curriculum "necessitates co-operation" between schools, who are being urged to compete in other policies. There is an apparent incoherence in the Government's stance on 'markets' in education, encouraging decentralisation in areas where organisational and economic efficiency may emerge but prohibiting this in crucial 'educational' areas.

Various suggestions have been offered as to why within the over- arching drive to an 'education market' (Cordingly & Wilby 1987, Simon 1988,1992), the 'paradoxical' process of decentralisation and centralisation of power has emerged (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Busher & Saran 1993). Busher & Saran (1993:179-180) identify "inconsistencies between intentions" in the Government's policies. Simon (1992) suggests that LMS is linked more closely to neo- liberal propositions of market forces, than the National Curriculum which may have been motivated by neo- Conservative desire for state control. However, despite these 'inconsistencies' and 'incoherence', the outcome may be united in creating a 'market economy' in education (Cordingly & Wilby 1987, Simon 1992), related to a rejection of the previous post- war beliefs in professionalism and partnership (Bullock & Thomas 1997). The thrust is to market forces but it is not a 'pure' market nor complete decentralisation, as hierarchical control remains pervasive. Williams (1995) argues the 'centralisation of control' is a defining feature.

Furthermore, control may be centralised, but responsibility decentralised. Arguably veiled in the language of 'efficiency', LMS is a means to pursue cost- savings at

school- level (Ball 1993)⁸. Ball (1993) perceives cuts as being ideological. With 'efficiency' and devolution, a shift in responsibility occurs attributing this to schools not state:

It is tempting to see the devolution of budgets and self- management as ways both of getting those being cut to cut themselves and to think that it is for the best because they control their own decline. There is a shift of institutional focus from the cuts themselves to the ways of coping with cuts, a shift to dealing with what you can control rather than what you can't. (*ibid* :77- 78).

What has occurred is the devolution of responsibility and blame for the 'fiscal crisis' (O'Connor 1973). However, the crisis is not purely financial and pragmatic, it relates to moral responsibility for the nature and purpose of the education system:

... once the rhetoric of devolution is accepted, then it becomes possible to blame the schools for the faults and difficulties inherent in, or created by, the policies. This is crucial. Parental choice and market schooling provide two avenues for the displacement of the legitimation crisis in education. (Ball 1993:77).

Governmental arguments of objective organisational and economic principles are rejected, replacing pragmatic conceptions of 'efficiency' with political, moral and ideological dimensions. LMS facilitates central control and influence, couched in a rhetoric of decentralisation that encompasses managerial practices and responsibility. Ball (1993) argues this amounts to the 'reconstruction' of the school as an organisation and head teachers as manager, located within the complex inter-relationships and power dependencies of markets, hierarchies and networks (Levacic 1995).

LMS: From the 'Macro' Market to 'Micro' Practices?

In practice, variations and undermining of the 'market' forces have occurred (Bowe & Ball 1992, Bullock & Thomas 1997, Levacic 1995). For an 'education market' to be established and flourish, it must be embodied in 'micro' practices. However, that such a development is precarious gives credence to the idea that policy is not simply

'implemented', but frequently resisted, reinterpreted and re-conceptualised (Bowe & Ball 1992, Burch & Wood 1990, Hogwood & Gunn 1984, Marsh & Rhodes 1992). There are physical, practical and perceived limitations and variations in the operation of a market in education (Bowe & Ball 1992). Bowe & Ball (1992:45) conclude:

There is certainly no one general education market that exists across LEAs or between communities in a particular locality. Rather there is a multitude of localized *and* specific market relations between groups or types of schools- micro- markets.

This reveals the need for detailed empirical study and a realisation that 'macro' trends will be realised differently at the 'micro' level.

'Marketing' at school level is varied and not based on objective predictions (Bowe & Ball 1992, Bullock & Thomas 1997, Levacic 1995). Levacic (1992, p.195) discusses "muted competition". Bowe & Ball (1992: 54) argue there must be a change in the 'values' and 'culture' of those involved. The extent to which such transformation has been achieved is dubious. Their research reveals a commonly re- iterated "danger of a wholesale transfer of commercial practices from industry into schools" (*ibid*: 55):

What emerges here is a possible, intrinsic value conflict between business methods and education as a public service (*ibid*: 58).

There are two important issues: firstly, how such a dilemma is 'resolved' in practice and secondly, what the impact on the education system is.

On the first point, the 'education market' is operating differently from a pure market. Bowe & Ball (1992:55) discern the existence and implications of "the ethics of educational markets.", e.g. a school would not compete with schools within its LEA but would with those out-with the LEA boundary. This accords with Bullock and Thomas's (1997) analysis of negotiated admission arrangements. Levacic (1995:104) posits that schools were 'institution responsive' not 'consumer responsive':

schools are keener to promote themselves and their educational values and to be responsive to other schools in their local network, rather than to find out about and respond directly to consumer preferences. (*ibid*: 196).

The 'education market' has been negotiated retaining elements of 'producer capture'.

A marriage between 'educational' and 'market' has not been achieved. Levacic (1995:128) suggests that head teachers have adopted a dual strategy:

The tensions between the collectivist values of the educational service and self-interested competitive institutional behaviour which is perceived to harm the system as a whole were evident in head teachers' reflections and represented genuine dilemmas. These had two principal foci, one outward and the other inward. The outward looking concern was with the conflict between acts of institutional self-interest which harmed schools collectively, such as 'poaching pupils' or going grant-maintained (GM), both of which were frowned upon. The inward tensions were between balancing different conceptions of value - educational value and monetary value - particularly with respect to staff recruitment.

A tension between markets and education impacts on teachers' perceptions and practices within schools (Bowe & Ball 1992).

Research indicates such tensions are pervasive and powerful (Bowe & Ball 1992, Bullock & Thomas 1997, Levacic 1995). This is complex, deriving not simply from the notion of markets but the wider policy and practice of LMS. Bowe & Ball (1992:34) explain:

Throughout the body of literature and rhetoric related to LMS in schools there is a division and a tension between those arguments which privilege the market and see the ERA as empowering customers and other which privilege organizational autonomy and see the ERA as empowering school managers.

Determining which argument has greatest validity is an empirical question, requiring consideration of the 'management' of LMS, of which 'marketing' is only a part.

LMS and 'Management'

Writers vary in their perception of 'management' as being distinctive from 'markets'. Some believe that it is in their combination that LMS gains its strength, while others perceive such a combination as tense and problematic (Bowe & Ball 1992). In the principles, perception and practice of LMS, 'management' is pervasive and pertinent.

From the Government's inception of LMS, it has been prescribed in accordance with the practice and perceived benefits of a 'rational model' of management (Levacic 1989,1992, 1995). The clearest and influential example is the Coopers & Lybrand (1988) report on LMS which became the 'blueprint' for the Government's policy and anticipated practices (Levacic 1989,1992). The fundamental point being:

The underlying philosophy of financial delegation to schools stems from the application of the principles of good management. Good management requires the identification of management units for which objectives can be set and resources allocated; the unit is then required to manage itself within those resources in a way which seeks to achieve the objectives; the performance of the unit is monitored and the unit is held to account for its performance and for its use of funds. These concepts are just as applicable in the public sector as they are in the private sector. (Coopers & Lybrand 1988: 1.5).

Accordingly, many writers have sought to outline and prescribe the features of this 'best practice' model of LMS (Blanchard *et al* 1989, Caldwell & Spinks 1988, Donnelly 1992, Fidler & Bowles 1989, Levacic 1992,1995).

While Coopers & Lybrand (1988) acknowledge that there are some 'strengths' in centralised systems, e.g. economies of scale, time saving and expertise, they argue that these 'losses' can be 'minimised' by an appropriate scheme of LMS:

But there can be major gains from delegation. It will increase the accountability of schools for providing value for money; it will give schools the flexibility to respond directly and promptly to the needs of the school and its pupils in a way which will increase the effectiveness and quality of the services provided. Schools will have more incentive to seek efficiency and economy in their resources since they will be able to apply the benefits of their good management to further improvements in their service. (*ibid*: 1.8).

The key words of accountability, responsiveness and flexibility, value for money and economy, efficiency and effectiveness are littered throughout prescriptions for and analysis of LMS (Bowe & Ball 1992, Bullock & Thomas 1997, DfE 1992b, Lee 1990, Levacic 1989, 1995, McAlister & Connolly 1990, Monck *et al* 1992), these relate essentially to a 'business' rather than educational discourse (Kenway *et al* 1993). The

combination of such varying aims may be problematic and compromised (Ball 1993, Bowe & Ball 1992, Bullock & Thomas 1997, Levacic 1995). From the inception of LMS, the impact was not simply to empower schools but to hold them to account: “The clear thrust of official pronouncements is that schools and LEAs should be developing ‘rational’ management control techniques.” (Levacic 1989:11)⁹.

Coopers & Lybrand (1988) indicate the benefits of LMS will affect LEA and school:

It encourages more clarity of thought by the LEA about what it wants from its schools, it helps increase schools’ understanding of the pressures on and perspectives of the LEA, and , equally important, vice versa; it can also make the job of head teacher a more complete and satisfying one. (*ibid*: 1.9).

The emphasis on pervasive and ‘positive’ benefits contradicts the concern about ‘weakening’ LEAs (Williams 1995) and ‘de- professionalising’ teachers (Bowe & Ball 1992, Bullock & Thomas 1997). The benefits and transformations to be achieved are not purely pragmatic, but also in values and perception:

The change at school level is from administration (of centrally determined programmes) to management (of local resources). What is required is a fundamental change in the philosophy of the organization of education. Thus the changes required in the culture and in the management processes are much wider than purely financial. (Coopers & Lybrand 1988: 1.12).

While the policy of LMS draws upon evidence of benefits through decentralised resource management (Peat Marwick 1986, McAlister & Connolly 1990), in the embodiment of allegedly universal models of organisational and managerial best practice, the policy seeks a transformation of the education system through a ‘rational model’. The Government’s aim is not the creation of ‘narrow’ Local Financial Management, rather “conditions for more effective management of schools as a whole” are established (DfE 1992b: 8). Scope is broadened by an integrative approach to reform, hence: “the ‘rational’, market model for radical change, which encompasses the financial environment as well as the decreed curricula and assessment requirements.” (Wallace 1993:4).

Levacic (1995: 65) outlines the features of the ‘rational model’ for ‘best practice’:

It advocates a system for allocating resources which is directed at the explicit achievement of institutional objectives. This requires clarity in the specification of objectives, gathering and analysing information on alternative ways of attaining the objectives, evaluating the alternatives and selecting those actions judged most likely to maximize achievement of objectives.

Such an approach can be derived from the classical prescriptions of sequential rational decision-making. For financial and resources management:

The first stage is the acquisition of resources... The second stage of the financial management cycle is allocating resources and planning the budget... The third stage of the budgetary cycle is implementation. This requires financial recording and monitoring... The fourth stage... is an evaluation of the implementation of budget plans to discover the extent to which the intended objectives were achieved, thus to provide improved information for the next round of budget decision-making. (*ibid*: 63- 64).

In essence, this is a technical, economic, universal and arguably ideal model that has been adopted for prescriptions concerning educational management. However, it contains elements from the human relations approach and educational literature advocating the development of participative management and 'school effectiveness' also (Caldwell & Spinks 1988, Chubb & Moe 1990, Levacic 1995, Mortimore *et al* 1988, Purkey & Smith 1983, Thomas & Martin 1996). School development planning provides a mechanism for improved educational and rational decision-making and planning, but requires greater integration and longevity of planning.

Moving from models of ideal 'best practice' to actual practice is problematic. Ever since the proposition of 'rational man', criticism has raged over its idealised and inapplicable nature (Child 1984, Dawson 1986, Handy 1985, Levacic 1995, McGregor 1960, Simon 1957). Concerning schools, Greenfield (with Ribbins 1993) has developed a long critique of economic models that fail to recognise the social construction of schools as organisations. Levacic (1995: 63) proposes that the closest educational decision-making can come to the rational model is in a "fuzzy variant". She argues that alternative perspectives "which are sidelined and largely ignored by the literature devoted to the 'good practice model' of local management" may have

relevance, relating to political and ambiguity perspectives and related developments such as critical theory and the 'garbage can' model¹⁰ (*ibid*: 81). With their emphasis on descriptive evidence of people, politics, power, constraint and ambiguity, they may offer greater scope for understanding the emerging system than the prescriptive and idealised rational, economic model.

While isolated approximations towards rational management may exist in practice, the overall evidence suggests the rational model is unrealistic and under- developed (Bowe & Ball 1992, Bullock & Thomas 1997, Levacic 1995). The existence of uncertainties and ambiguities within schools and their environments plus the 'irrational' behaviour of actors indicates the rational model is essentially prescriptive and does not describe nor explain the reality of school management. Bowe & Ball's (1992: 140- 141) discuss the uncertainty and complexity of change, which may create 'dilemmas and contradictions' for school managers. This inhibits rational management based upon clear goals and predictable outcomes. The "pace of change" has resulted in "ad hoc" and crisis management (*ibid*: 165- 166). The consequence is "innovation overload" (*ibid*: 169) which renders sequential and rational management problematic. If improved educational management and the integration of a rational approach is to be achieved, greater stability in the external and policy environments are necessary (Levacic 1995).

An universal model fails to recognise the complexity and variations associated with implementation. Bowe & Ball (1992) suggest that change is realised differently in different settings. This can be related to external factors, e.g. the micro- market. Factors specific to each school are important, e.g. "institutional cultures do play a part in the moulding and selection of managerial responses to LMS." (*ibid*: 164). As does the head teacher's personality and skills (Maden 1992). Bullock & Thomas (1997:139) "illustrate the uncertainty which is endemic to schools as organisations.", e.g. lack of adequate information. Budget levels are externally determined and therefore generate constraint on management within schools (*ibid*, Bowe & Ball 1992). Time is a constraint also (Bowe & Ball 1992). Decision- making in schools is frequently ambiguous and subjective relying on qualitative and professional judgement (Bullock

& Thomas 1997, Levacic 1995). Factors such as objective measures of efficiency and effectiveness are inherently difficult, if not impossible, to calculate in education (Bowe & Ball 1992). It is intrinsically difficult to determine and adjudicate between the variety of 'local need' (Monck *et al* 1992). The notion of responsive, participative decision-making is rarely realised. This has implications for human relations and educational prescriptions also.

In the development of the rational model into the stages of financial management cycles and development planning problems persist. Evidence on the emergence of school development planning demonstrates a range of stages (Bullock & Thomas 1997, DFE 1992b, HMCI 1994, Levacic 1995, MacGilchrist *et al* 1995). The sequence of decision-making, financial management and planning appears not to be realised in a rational and integrated manner, furthermore the linking to educational purpose is under-developed at best and non-existent in some cases (Bowe & Ball 1992, Bullock & Thomas 1997, Levacic 1995, MacGilchrist *et al* 1995). This raises serious doubt about the applicability and realisation of the Government's principles of 'efficiency' and 'effectiveness' to be achieved through the rational model of LMS (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Levacic 1995).

That a model of 'best practice' does not exist in practice does not undermine its pervasive appeal for the Government (Coopers & Lybrand 1988) and some academics (Lee 1990, Maden 1992, Monck *et al* 1992). By the Government's promotion of rational models and congruent efficiency and effectiveness, inefficiency or ineffectiveness can be attributed to the irrational behaviour of those at school-level. Hence, the decentralisation of blame and responsibility. Yet, it appears teachers also believe that present problems can be ameliorated by managerial solutions:

many senior managers hold a strong belief in applied rationality, a commitment to the power of logic... if only they could get the systems and structures 'right' then everything else will fall into place; complexity will be simplified, contradictions resolved, tensions and conflict virtually eliminated making institutional context more 'manageable'... the view that current structures and

process of management are not quite right and do not work- but with the appropriate changes things could be 'got right'. (Bowe & Ball 1992:157).

This generates optimism about the future and desire for prescription.

In Bowe & Ball's (1992) analysis, the quest for rationality and 'best practice' is insidious as discourse and ideology:

There is a degree to which it is the rational patina of management discourse that actually provides the sense of a future state of good order, the long-term 'cure' against the threat of chaos. Thus in a context which *is* increasingly complex, ambiguous and disordered it may be that the language of management and rationality perform a symbolic function. To contemplate that this might be the wrong language, that it misrepresents the true state of things would be to contemplate the unacceptable. Estler (1988) argues exactly this. Hence the tenets of technical- rational management:

Provide a 'kind of legitimation' by giving the appearance of rationality to processes necessarily surrounded by ambiguity, it lends meaning to the lives of participants who live in a world valuing rationality; and it provides a sense of order to participants in an environment that is often disorderly. (Duignan 1990, p.334). (Bowe & Ball 1992:179- 180).

The management of change in educational organisations is notoriously difficult (Fullan 1982), especially due to "cultural resistance" (Bowe & Ball 1992:154). However, if the discourse of management is presented as sufficiently rational, reasonable, technical and pervasive, it may overcome these cultural barriers and in doing so make the very process of change political.

Ball (1993) develops the notion of 'management' as powerful, political discourse:

Management is both a body of precepts, assumptions and theory, to be learned by managers, and a set of practices to be implemented, encompassing both managers and managed. (*ibid*: 66).

That the latter may be problematic does not undermine the former:

... the reform process in the UK is not simply structural or technical; it is also cultural and ideological. On the one hand... management as practice is unstable

and complex: 'Its success is proportional to its ability to hide its own mechanisms' (Foucault, 1979, p.86). But, on the other hand, as a discourse of power and control, management is both a sophisticated technology and a pervasive commonsensical perspective. (*ibid*: 70).

The analysis is critical identifying politics and power as driving forces rather than pragmatic arguments of objective rationality.

Nevertheless, 'management' can be presented in various ways. Ball (1993: 67) proposes: "management itself (as theory/ as practice) is not of a piece. It is not a unitary perspective.". He argues there are three discourses discernible in the present promotion of 'management' for education. Firstly, 'professional management', related to school development planning, emphasising the educational and professional elements of the 'management' of 'change':

In many ways this is the acceptable face of management. In as much that it begins from the professional end of the planning spectrum, it is 'clean' (context- free) management insofar as it treats the school in isolation and concentrates upon the business of *education* rather than education as *business*... this approach is very process- oriented... It divorces management practices from values and from politics... It is technically- oriented, rational and apolitical. (*ibid*: 67).

In contrast is 'financial management':

for practitioners the unacceptable face of management... [features such as] per capita funding, 'rate- capping'... and competition with neighbouring schools... Here the task of budgeting is simply a matter of costing policies. (*ibid*: 67- 68).

This discourse links with the wider business and economic ethos of the third discourse: 'entrepreneurial management'. Here the market is to the fore; image, hype, PR, competition, diversification and alternative sources of income provide the lexicon. (*ibid*: 68).¹¹

The three discourses of professional/ educational, financial and entrepreneur/ market can be discerned in many of the policy documents and reports surrounding LMS and DSM. However, caution is required with the precise categorisation adopted. In Ball's 'professional' discourse, he includes rational models and apolitical approaches, these

are not exclusively educational arguments. While the study of educational management is frequently apolitical (Ozga 1992), this does not entail that its practice is value-free. While there is a discourse of cost-cutting and fiscal issues, the term 'financial management' can be adopted for a rational perspective. Therefore, caution in the precise categorisation and terminology is required.

Nevertheless, the fundamental point that a disjunction between 'educational' arguments and 'business' ones exists stands. Ball (1993:69) explains: "In practice these discourses are not mutually exclusive, although their mixing is not easily achieved". However, differences are often obscured in political arguments that use 'educational' discourse, to implement 'managerial' and 'market' reforms. We are presented with the insidious use of the management discourse, premised on the generation of efficiency and effectiveness not simply in organisational and economic terms but also educational. However, the fact that such objectives and discourses may be inherently different and irreconcilable is ignored, one could argue deliberately so in order to gain the acceptance and support of the educational practitioners. This raises political, conceptual and ideological issues. It raises also the question of the practical implications of an economic and business model of management to education. Ball (1993: 71) uncovers a substantial and increasing 'gap' between school managers and teachers, between 'management' and 'education':

there is a clear division or 'gap' developing between school managers, oriented primarily to matters of financial planning, income generation and marketing, and classroom practitioners, oriented primarily to the demands of the National Curriculum and national testing. Notions like collaborative planning (Caldwell and Spinks) ideologically paper over the significance of such divisions. But this is a 'gap' of values, purposes and perspective.

Decision-making is hierarchical, placing the head teacher in a powerful but problematic position between practitioner and client (Ball 1993, Bowe & Ball 1993, Busher & Saran 1993). Furthermore, the capacity for rational knowledge of these groups is unrealistic, suggesting concern about the linkage of management reform and educational process (Bowe & Ball 1992). However, this is not simply a matter of

conjecture but of empirical investigation of the nature and implications of changing roles and relationships in the reformed education system.

The Role of the School

That LMS was envisaged to have a profound effect at school- level is without doubt. Research indicates there are varying roles and responsibilities emerging at school-level, in which the head teacher is often pivotal.

The Governing Body

Legislation from the 1980s onwards, strengthened the role of the governing body (Deem 1990, Golby 1992, Hill 1989, Levacic 1992). Symbolically, governors were re-defined:

from the Woolwich to the Bank of England (Blanchard *et al* 1989:95)

from tea party tokens to ‘company directors’ (Rao 1990:23)

However, governors were not omnipotent, being made accountable and placed in a relationship to the head teacher. From policy, the role of governors is confused and ambiguous (Lee 1990, Levacic 1995, Sallis 1989). In practice a variation of roles and relationships are emerging, depending upon factors such as the nature, ability and resources of the governors, plus that of the head teacher and his management style (Bullock & Thomas 1997, DfE 1992b, Lee 1990, Levacic 1995).

Generally, head teachers retain the key management role. Governing bodies may set the general framework and oversight, while the head teacher is responsible for the day-to-day running of the school (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Levacic 1995). Governing bodies tend to make decisions in non- educational areas only. Furthermore, they are heavily dependent on the head teacher to provide information and resources, make and implement decisions. Levacic (1995:134) argues that governing bodies are in “an unequal partnership” with head teachers, the latter is dominant. Head teachers need to ‘cultivate’ relationships with governing bodies (Fidler & Bowles 1989, Levacic 1995). The role of the governing body has grown, but it has not diminished but altered the head teacher’s role.

The Role of the Head Teacher

As with DSM, it is the role of the head teacher which is most affected by LMS:

This is not due simply to the addition of financial management as a further responsibility but to the greater complexity of managing semi- autonomous schools in a quasi- market environment... It has increased the power of head teachers, both *de jure* and *de facto*, as they, in practice, exercise the power given by the legislation to governing bodies. (Levacic 1995:184)

The head teacher's role has been enhanced and enlarged in terms of management and leadership (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Fidler & Bowles 1989, Knight 1993, Levacic 1995, Thomas *et al* 1989) affecting their role in external and internal environments.

Levacic (1995:110- 112) argues the head teacher's role has changed in "boundary management", as they are the school's link with the external world. This involves the development of "networks" and "micro- political" activity with other head teachers, schools, the LEA and members of the community (*bid*). Such a role is not simply outward looking, but also inwardly focussed (Levacic 1995). The head teacher is depicted as a "buffer" (*bid*: 127) or 'gate- keeper' (Wallace 1990). Such analogy is carried further by Bowe & Ball (1992:173) suggesting the head teacher's role involves symbolic leadership, as "critical reality definer" . The head teacher is placed in a powerful position to influence the role of the school and the practice and perception of associated actors.

Most studies of LMS and head teachers focus on the "Budget and resource management" role (Levacic 1995:113). Head teachers are involved with various financial management tasks and budgeting procedures (Arnott *et al* 1993b, Bullock & Thomas 1997, DfE 1992b, Levacic 1995). While most head teachers welcomed the benefits of LMS (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Levacic 1995) , the majority did not want more responsibilities delegated from the LEA. Head teachers are aware of an increased administrative workload (Arnott *et al* 1993, Bowe & Ball 1992, Bullock & Thomas 1997, DfE 1992, Levacic 1995). While some perceived such developments as a necessary trade off for the increased 'freedom', many more complained about the pressure and burden created (Arnott *et al* 1993b). This may impinge upon their role as

“Instructional leadership” (Levacic 1995:118). Increased time spent on external, budget and resource management can reduce the time available for head teachers to spend with pupils and staff (Arnott *et al* 1993b, Bullock & Thomas 1997, DfE 1992b, Levacic 1995). The implications of the head teacher’s role may take them away from educational matters, impacting both on the quality of teaching and learning and on the ability to make appropriate management and budgetary decisions (Bowe & Ball 1992, Bullock & Thomas 1997).

Within the overall trends, variations exist. Practical issues such as budget levels alter the nature of the head teacher’s management role (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Lee 1990). Personal variations in the head teacher’s management style are influential (Lee 1990, Levacic 1989). Sectorial differences exist, with head teachers in small primary schools tending to be burdened more (Levacic 1995). In the primary sector, budget delegation is more problematic (*ibid*). In all schools, the extent to which head teachers delegate responsibilities affects the scope and capacity of their role.

The Senior Management Team

Writers suggest that increased delegation and participation within schools would serve not only to relieve the head teacher but also to improve decision- making (Busher & Saran 1993, Levacic 1995). Delegation of budget and resource management to the Senior Management Team or a Depute head is considered appropriate (Downes 1988, Knight 1993). To varying degrees, this has occurred (Bullock & Thomas 1997, DfE 1992b, Levacic 1995). Issues of workload and reduced contact with pupils and other staff can be a problem (DfE 1992b). Such a development can be educationally unproductive and financially costly, as members of SMT’s salaries are far greater than an ‘administrative officer’ (*ibid*). Furthermore, so far delegation is not particularly well planned and allocated (DfE 1992b, Levacic 1995).

The Role of Teachers

Levacic (1995) commented that LMS is not based upon classroom teacher empowerment. Nevertheless, there remains advocacy for the benefits of teacher participation and collegial decision- making (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Busher & Saran

1993, Levacic 1995, Nias *et al* 1992, Wallace 1992). In practice, teacher participation is neither particularly widespread nor developed (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Busher & Saran 1993, DfE 1992b, Levacic 1995). Some teachers have less decision-making power than pre-LMS:

If anything there was a trend to less budgetary autonomy for heads of department due to centralization of decision-making within the senior management team and a greater emphasis on addressing whole school priorities. Previously, heads of department could go to LEA advisers for pockets of money quite independently of their head teachers. (Levacic 1995:125).

Bowe & Ball (1992:70) develop this critique:

... decision-making increasingly rests with a small group of staff (Bowe and Ball 1990), pulling schools away from the new management styles of 'post-Fordism' and back towards technocratic, hierarchical managerial styles.

The perception that teachers are not 'interested' and lack sufficient 'expertise' (Levacic 1995) manifests a 'sense of exclusion' and makes a nonsense of 'self-determination' for classroom teachers (Bowe & Ball 1992). Staff involvement is limited in practice (Levacic 1995) and purpose, primarily linked to classroom and educational issues not overall decision-making (Bullock & Thomas 1997).

One way in which LMS is affecting teachers is in an increased cost-awareness (Bullock & Thomas 1997). Some positive benefits were perceived, e.g. better care, use and awareness of resources. However, there were 'negative' outcomes too, creating conflict between departments and staff and general concern about "lack of money, falling rolls and the danger of losing staff" (*ibid*: 84). Greater cost-awareness had extended to teachers considering their own cost and generating insecurity (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Levacic 1995).

Some schools are "securing high levels of staff participation and internal delegation" (Bullock & Thomas 1997:152). Primaries are fairing better (Levacic 1995). In all sectors, smaller schools are more participatory (due to ease) and those in financial difficulties (due to the implications for staff) (*ibid*). However, all the evidence points to

a 'demarcation' (Bullock & Thomas 1997:153) between 'educational' and managerial decision-making linked to personnel and budgeting. Consequently, the extent to which LMS impact upon classroom activity and the 'core' of teaching and learning is dubious (Levacic 1995). This is a serious finding. Research suggests that involvement in LMS can improve teachers' attitudes towards the reform, related to a sense of 'ownership' and staff morale (*ibid*). Teacher involvement should facilitate that LMS decision-making is linked to teaching and learning.

Non- Teaching Staff

Schools include a range of non-teaching staff and since LMS an increasing variety and number of such posts exists (Bullock & Thomas 1997, DfE 1992b). Most significant are clerical and financial support staffs, who head teachers increasingly rely on to manage LMS (Bullock & Thomas 1997, DfE 1992b, Levacic 1995). The "role extension for the school secretary" (Levacic 1995:121) requires new skills, e.g. computing, and consequent training, up-grading, salary enhancement and increased hours (Bullock & Thomas 1997, DfE 1992b). More clerical staff are being appointed, sometimes along with a new role of bursar (*ibid*). Bullock and Thomas (1997:96) explain there have been differing reactions to the "quite dramatic alteration in the nature of the work of some administrative/ clerical staff". Some clerical assistants view their new role as "a welcome career opportunity", while others bemoan the imposition of change and loss of their old job (*ibid*: 97). The SMT and head teacher in particular are supportive and encouraging, while teaching staff do not recognise the change, or are hostile to the increased influence of clerical staff (Levacic 1995). This re-enforces the 'gap' between 'management' and 'education' emerging through LMS (Bowe & Ball 1992).

Parents and Pupils

In the 'education market', notions of 'parental choice' and parents as consumer/client appear to place parents in a more powerful position. However, as concerns LMS, there is limited impact on the role of the generality of parents. The key role is through participation in either standing for or electing the governing body. Concerns exist as to how representative and capable parent-members of governing bodies are (Blanchard *et*

al 1989). The role of most parents is to be generally supportive of the school and help with fund-raising (Levacic 1995). This does not equate with great participation nor is it a dramatic change from previous practices. Concerns have been voiced about the lack of reference to pupils' direct involvement in the LMS legislation (Lee 1990). Bullock & Thomas (1997) argue that LMS and notions of school 'autonomy' have not increased the 'autonomy of the individual learner'. Rather a 'commodification' of pupils has occurred.

A Split Between 'Management' and 'Education'?

In the lack of widespread participation, the concentration of managerial decision-making in the hands of head teachers and sometimes SMT, and the exclusion or undermining of classroom teachers, a 'gap' between teachers and managers has been created (Ball 1993, Bowe & Ball 1992). This gap "represents a division of values of purpose" (Bowe & Ball 1992:159). This trend of centralisation despite promotion of 'decentralisation' is argued to mirror the 'macro-changes' occurring (Busher & Saran 1993). The extent to which managerial reform is intrinsically linked to improved education is problematic. Furthermore, LMS has the capacity to change roles internal and external to the school.

The Role of the Local Education Authority

Most studies of LMS do not focus specifically on the implications at LEA level, although some offer comment determined through the perceptions of head teachers (Bullock & Thomas 1997, DfE 1992b) or the policy of LMS (Wallace 1993, Williams 1995). Esp (1989) does focus specifically on the impact of LMS and the role of the LEA. However, his evidence is drawn from critique of the policy not empirical study. Levacic (1995) is the exception in undertaking limited empirical study of the LEA as well as the school¹².

There is general agreement that LMS is part of the wider attempt to 'weaken' LEAs and 'attack' local government (Ranson & Thomas 1989, Wallace 1993, Williams 1995). LMS is not simply a school-level measure as it has ramifications for the LEA, as inherent in Levacic's (1995: 7- 8) definition:

Local management of schools (LMS) refers to the set of measures by which LEA control was diminished and the autonomy of schools enhanced.

LMS has had “profound effects on LEAs” (*ibid*: 10), a view shared by many who perceive it as changing and challenging the role of the LEA (Audit Commission 1988, Bullock & Thomas 1997, DfE 1992b, Esp 1989, Lee 1990, Levacic 1992, 1995). Under LMS and related legislation, a statutory but changed role for the LEA is inherent. Coopers & Lybrand’s (1988) ‘blueprint’ for LMS included recommendations for LEAs:

The LEA would relinquish direct and detailed control and would focus on issues of major importance. In order to make the local management of schools (LMS) work effectively the LEA would need to set a framework within which the schools operate; devise the method by which resources are to be allocated within the framework; determine the total level of resources and support to be made available to schools; monitor schools’ performance and provide accountability for the effective use of public funds. The LEA would also have to operate sanctions if necessary. (Esp 1989:172).

There may be problems in fulfilling these new roles (*ibid*). This is a common interpretation of various authors who condense the various roles outlined into a “new strategic and evaluative role for the LEA” (DfE 1992b: 12).

The ‘strategic’ role of the LEA is considered key to its future operation (DfE 1992b, Lee 1990). Esp (1989:172- 174) argues the strategic planning role may be problematic given the diversity of demands and new conditions in which LEAs must take on the roles of: “*Setting the framework for delegation*”, “*Devising the method by which resources are to be allocated*”, and “*Determining the total level of resources and support to be made available to schools*”. HMI’s research indicates that LEAs have had great difficulties in determining and setting LMS formula (DfE 1992b). The strategic role is made problematic by the context of GMS, making long- term authority wide planning by the LEA difficult (Esp 1989). The increased power of schools, governors and parents makes the imposition of strategic management difficult, as this relies upon their acceptance (*ibid*). There is tension between the strategic capacity of LEA and responsiveness (*ibid*).

What HMI call the 'evaluative role' (DfE 1992b), encompasses monitoring and regulatory roles described by others (Esp 1989, Lee 1990, Levacic 1995, Ranson & Thomas 1989). Monitoring, inspection and advisory roles were perceived as the LEA's future (Lee 1990, Levacic 1995). However, the Audit Commission (1988:2) argued:

Since other intervention from the LEA centre will diminish, the local inspectorate will become the main instrument by which the LEA discharges its duty to ensure the provision of satisfactory education.

This suggests that education officers would be marginalised. To an extent, such problems were overcome by the creation of the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) with responsibilities for inspection and evaluation. However, OFSTED serves further to make the context and role of LEAs complex and constrained. Evidence indicates that the LEA's "evaluative role" was frequently "unclear" and "not well linked to budgeting" (Levacic 1995:101). While there was a "comparatively weak role for the LEA in terms of accountability", as schools tended not to perceive themselves as accountable to the LEA (Bullock & Thomas 1997: 133).

In the Government's promotion of LMS based upon the 'enabling' LEA (Levacic 1995), it is assumed that the 'service provision' role is no longer important. Rather service provision can be provided by the market of public and private suppliers. However, evidence of continuing use of LEA services, support for their existence and concerns about their future is pervasive (Arnott *et al* 1993b, Bullock & Thomas 1997, DfE 1992b, Lee 1990, Levacic 1995). LMS requires the provision of LEA services to schools, e.g. I.T. and training. These were considered to be vital despite initial "teething problems" (DfE 1992b: 29). Concerns exist about the implications of LMS for central and support services, especially "in disadvantaged areas" (DfE 1992b: 12) and for special educational needs (DfE 1992b, Lee 1990). A strong desire for the maintenance of LEA support services and worries about their diminution exist (Bullock & Thomas 1997, DfE 1992b).

Even for services which are no longer essentially LEA services, support for provision remains. Arguably the Government's aim was to reduce the interventionist and professional nature of LEAs, yet head teachers view LEAs "as a source of professional advice" (Bullock & Thomas 1997:118). Many schools still purchase LEA 'educational

services', frequently a 'package of services' is delivered, and popular with schools, facilitating bulk purchasing and economies of scale (Levacic 1995). Hence, most LEA services had 'survived' and "served a vital function" (*ibid.*: 163). The majority of head teachers do not want further delegation of LEA services (Bullock & Thomas 1997). Indeed, while some LEAs had delegated services in order to discourage opting out, many head teachers felt that the services delegated would be better provided centrally. A LEA service role remains and receives popular support.

However, the future of LEA services appears fragile. There is concern about the "undermining of services" (Bullock & Thomas 1997:111), loss of economies of scale, plus the cost of market transactions (Levacic 1995), or if schools do not purchase services (Lee 1990). That LEA services are popular is evident in head teacher's "call for the retention of services" (Bullock & Thomas 1997:111)¹³. The movement away from LEA service provision was perceived as problematic for education.

Another important concern identified by Bullock & Thomas (1997:110) is the "Loss of strategic planning". Head teachers believe that LMS has generated the inability to plan long term, created "fragmentation in the whole system" and removed the "valuable role" of the LEA "in planning and co- ordination of school places and services". (*ibid.*) Williams (1995:13- 14) is critical of the "loss of the broadly focussed binocular overview and expertise of LEA" and its replacement by the "monocular perception" and "narrowly parochial" focus of individual schools. Concerns centre on the capacity of LEAs to fulfil a strategic role given the reduced powers and increased individualised focus of schools.

LMS has affected the nature and role of LEA staff. Head teachers were concerned about the "loss of dedicated, skilled staff" within LEAs (Bullock & Thomas 1997:109- 110, Wallace 1993). This may create problems for schools who want professional and expert help from the LEA (Bullock & Thomas 1997). At the LEA- level, there are problems associated with changes in conditions and nature of work (Levacic 1995). While education officers leaving the service (*ibid.*) seem almost inevitable, this has negative effects, especially upheaval and insecurity at LEA and school levels.

All of the above places doubts over the benefits accrued by the Government's intended new role for LEAs. Strategic management and capacity appear problematic and in some respects undermined. Whereas the service role remains and has considerable support, rendering diminution in this role as problematic. There are concerns at both LEA and school level about the future role of the LEA. However, there are perceived benefits also.

Head teachers perceived benefits from LMS for both the management and decision-making at school and LEA levels. At the LEA- level, there is "less bureaucracy" and "improved decision- making" (Bullock & Thomas 1997:112-113). Head teachers can decide on their own priorities (*ibid*, Levacic 1995). These benefits are evident from head teachers' perceptions and government proposals, unfortunately the literature does not explore the LEA- level perception of these 'benefits'.

Some head teachers have a "desire for further delegation" (Bullock & Thomas 1997:113). Most wanted this in specific areas only, e.g. grounds maintenance. "Several" wanted a "cheque book" system (*ibid*: 114). While for some, greater delegation was an interim step to opting out. Some wished to remain within the LEA system, but felt that having proved their capacity with the existing LMS, further delegation was natural. However, " A rare view is a preference for maximum delegation which forces schools to rely on their own capacities" (*ibid* :114- 115). For a minority of head teachers, the benefit of LMS is that it may lead to a future with no role for a LEA. However, overall further delegation was unpopular. Generally, where greater delegation is sought it is within the confines of a remaining role for a restructured LEA.

LEAs are and should be restructuring in order to fulfil their role of strategic management, monitor/ evaluator and non- monopoly service provider (DfE 1992b, Esp 1989, Lee 1990, Levacic 1992,1995). The early HMI evaluation of LMS revealed that specific changes were occurring, e.g. creation of a LMS Unit and introduction of I.T. (DfE 1992b). As part of the general reform of the education service, a review of central organisation was occurring (*ibid*). There is a need to restructure LEA service

provision to move from a monopolistic situation to a complex and competitive environment. Such changes were occurring during introduction of LMS:

LMS is also encouraging many LEAs to think about the way in which they provide services to schools. A small but growing number are either establishing service contracts with individual schools or are delegating funding directly to them, enabling them to buy in what services they require. In either case, the trend is to move to leaner central provision. (DfE 1992b: 30).

Lee (1990:14) notes the move to contracted services and suggests certain LEA services could become “transformed into semi- autonomous agencies”. Although the outcome is not yet clear, a leaner central organisation and reformed service provision is likely. Esp (1989: 177) argues controversially but perhaps prophetically that: “One option is a national education service which excludes the local authorities from significant involvement”. In order to ensure the capacity of LEAs to retain and fulfil a future role, Esp (1989) argued the need for structural and cultural changes.

Levacic (1992,1995) argues LEAs are now akin to ‘internal markets’. The LEA acts as a purchaser of education services from schools. It acts also as a seller of its central services to schools. This places the LEA in a new external context and set of relationships related primarily to the ‘market’. However, within the LEA, hierarchical control may remain or become strong to ensure control, co-ordination and direction. According to Levacic (1992, 1995) such developments have produced and require a radical transition in the structure of the LEA, from a traditional unitary form organisation (U- form) to a modern multi- divisional form (M- form)¹⁴. While the creation of cost centres and performance measurement facilitate the M-form organisation in education, it remains a model with distinctions from practice. The LEA’s monitoring and accountability roles are undermined and complicated by the creation of OFSTED, the Funding Agency for Schools (FAS), governing body power and the need to represent parents.

Wider Changes in Education and Local Government Policies and Potential Implications for the Role of the LEA

Adequate consideration of the changing role of the LEA must draw upon a literature wider than that concerned with LMS. It is necessary to consider the wider issue of the future role of local government in education (Adams & Hunter 1994, Audit Commission 1989, Benn & Benn 1993, Coopers & Lybrand Deloitte 1992, Cordingley & Kogan 1993, Cordingley & Riley 1992, Ferguson 1994, Gee & Maden 1988, Heller with Edwards 1992, Lawlor 1988, Ranson 1992, Ranson & Tomlinson 1994, Rao 1990, Riley 1992,1996). This literature's broad focus and empirical research basis is beneficial.

Many argue that local government has been challenged and changed especially during the 'Thatcher years' and beyond (Alexander 1990,1991, Butcher *et al* 1990, Clarke & Stewart 1988, Cochrane 1993, Gee & Maden 1988, Leach *et al* 1992,1996, Marsh & Rhodes 1992, Stewart & Stoker 1989). A common interpretation being that local government must move from a direct service provider and interventionist role to an enabling and strategic role in the market forces which have been created and ultimately may erode the future existence of local government. Many commentators perceive the LEA as being especially identified for changes and challenges (Benn & Benn 1993, Cordingley & Kogan 1993, Ranson 1992, Tomlinson 1994). Various reasons can be suggested - education is the largest spending department with a history of intervention and service provision, 'producer capture' and professionalism are inherent, which are counter to the wishes of 'Thatcherism' (Butcher *et al* 1990, Marsh & Rhodes 1992, Rhodes & Marsh 1992). Commentators perceive the reforming and questioning of LEAs as originating from political imperatives, especially New Right (Benn & Benn 1993, Gee & Maden 1988, Heller with Edwards 1992, Ranson 1992, Ranson & Tomlinson 1994). Nevertheless, some non- right wing commentators posited arguments for the demise of LEAs (Ranson 1992). There is a suggestion that LEAs are at least partially self- responsible (Heller with Edwards 1992) - due to "Local Government's Own Goal Tendency" (Gee & Maden 1988:4), including the general and financial incompetence and inappropriateness of some activities. Nevertheless, there is general agreement that it is the former political ideals which has given greatest impetus and direction to recent reforms (Gee & Maden 1988, Heller with Edwards 1992, Ranson 1992). What is debatable is the extent to which the objective was to abolish

LEAs (Lawlor 1988), to retain LEAs “on probation” but starved of functions so they would “wither on the vine” (Ranson 1992: 4- 5) viewed as the crueller option of a “slow, lingering death” (Benn & Benn 1993:67), or whether a changed but significant role for LEAs could be generated (Audit Commission 1989, Rao 1990). The solution depended on the political will of central government, the proactivity and reactions of local government and the ability to prove the “case” for LEAs (Tomlinson 1994).

The Education Reform Act 1988 and the Role of LEAs

Some commentators argue the impact of ERA would be the demise and ending of the LEA (Lawlor 1988, Simon 1992). However, many argued ERA retained a role for the LEA and it was the LEA’s responsibility to respond and reform appropriately (Audit Commission 1989, Cordingley & Riley 1992, Gee & Maden 1988, Rao 1990). ERA did represent a demise in the power of the LEA (Audit Commission 1989, Ranson 1992). Nevertheless, the LEA retained a range of functions and responsibilities which it should develop, especially a significant and new strategic role (Audit Commission 1989, Cordingley & Riley 1992, Heller with Edwards, 1992, Kogan, 1994, Ranson, 1992).

The Audit Commission (1989) produced *Losing an Empire, Finding a Role*, an influential report concerning the future role of the LEA. They argued: “The LEA is, in short, central to the success of the reform package” and responsible “to promote excellence in education” (*ibid*: 3), it is not “entirely redundant” (*ibid*: 2). However, the environment had changed dramatically - “pluralist”, “far more complex and heterogeneous”, with “much greater volatility in the system” (*ibid*: 1-2). Furthermore, “three shifts in power and responsibility away from the LEA” have occurred - “upward” to “national bodies”, “downward... to schools” and “outward... to parents” (*ibid*: 2). The Audit Commission (1989:1) is clear in its message, LEAs must recognise the external changes and review their internal capacities in order to generate a future role:

This new role could be as rewarding as the old, but only if the LEA redefines its strategy in a manner consistent with the Act, explains it clearly to the other players, and ensures that the staff, skills and systems are in place to deliver it.

Alternatively, “if LEAs do not grasp the implications of ERA and respond positively to them they could become marginalised” (*ibid*: 3). The changes to occur for LEAs as a result of ERA are pervasive. The Audit Commission (1989) argue the internal organisation should be restructured with changes affecting officers and members. The proposal is a leaner central organisation with a redistribution of resources from the LEA to school- level. LEAs will need to operate in “co- operation” and “collaboration” with other authorities and bodies rather than the tendency to “work in highly autonomous ways” (*ibid*: 12). Much of the LEA ‘Empire’ has been ‘lost’, or at least altered.

The Audit Commission (1989) proposes six ‘roles’ to be found:

LEADER/ VISIONARY: Setting the “overall policy objectives and to define the context within which schools operate” (*ibid*: 5), including “articulating a vision of what the education service is trying to achieve” (*ibid*: 1), encouraging “co- operation” between schools (*ibid*: 5) and “neighbouring authorities” (*ibid*: 6), plus taking “the lead in developing links between educational institutions, voluntary bodies and local employers” (*ibid*).

PARTNER: To “support” schools and colleges, especially in curriculum delivery, use of financial and human resources, and “development and planning” (*ibid*). The ‘partnership’ is not to be where schools are “in a ‘client’ or subservient role. Rather it should be designed to assist them to achieve autonomy.” (*ibid*). LEAs will have to cultivate this ‘partnership’ and be responsive to the needs and wishes of schools, e.g. through “consultation and co- operation” (*ibid*). This may involve changes in the advisory service and a shift to “contractual arrangements” for LEA services to schools (*ibid*: 7). However, in ‘supporting’ schools to make decisions, LEAs have the capacity also to intervene if the school is not managing LMS “in a satisfactory manner” (*ibid*: 6).

PLANNER: In short, “of facilities for the future” (*ibid*: 1). The wishes of schools and parents must be taken into consideration alongside “objective assessment of need” (*ibid*: 8), in order to create “a more sensitive and consensual basis” for “open planning” (*ibid*).

INFORMATION PROVIDER: The Government intends to introduce market forces and therefore LEAs should provide appropriate information, “helping people to make informed choices” (*ibid*: 1).

REGULATOR/ BUYER: It is the regulatory role that is emphasised rather than the LEA as a full ‘buyer’ in an internal market (Levacic 1992,1995). The LEA is a ‘buyer’ of education for students, related to the regulatory function whereby LEAs must monitor, inspect and report on the performance of schools. Changes in the nature of inspection and the distribution of performance measures must occur to enable public and professional judgements.

BANK MANAGER: LEAs “remain ultimately responsible for determining the quantum of resources to be devoted to education in their area” (Audit Commission 1998:9). However, in the “overhauled” “financial environment”, LEAs must develop “the skill of contingency planning” and “develop more open channels of communications with head teachers and governors to assess the implications at individual institutions of different funding levels” (*ibid*).

The Audit Commission (*ibid*) suggests: “The six different roles discussed above are intended to be collectively exhaustive but are certainly not mutually exclusive”. There is “scope for local discretion” (*ibid*: 1), although all six roles must be involved. There is a mixture of a strategic role and an evaluative/ regulatory role, plus the possibility of a reduced but remaining service provider role, as in LMS research (Arnott *et al* 1993b, Bullock & Thomas 1997, DfE 1992b, Esp 1989, Lee 1990, Levacic 1995, Ranson & Tomlinson 1989). Although the Audit Commission’s (1989) suggestions are “general” (Cordingley & Kogan 1993:76), researchers have drawn similar conclusions of a strategic and regulatory role for LEAs (Cordingley & Kogan 1993, Kogan 1994, Ranson 1992, Rao 1990). The pace and manner in which LEAs undertook this task and in their ultimate objectives varied, frequently due to the political nature and values of the LEA (Heller with Edwards 1992, Ranson 1992, Ranson & Tomlinson 1994, Riley 1992,1996).

There is arguably another vital role linked to the LEA’s local democratic function:

The value of local democratic accountability in education- omitted on occasions by the Audit Commission and ignored by the central government agenda- is a key ingredient of a locally based education service. (Cordingley & Riley 1992:161).

Rather than the managerialist focus of the Audit Commission and Central Government, many writers identify the democratic dimension as a vital function and rationale for LEAs (Adams & Hunter 1994, Coopers & Lybrand Deloitte 1992, Cordingley & Kogan 1993, Cordingley & Riley 1992, Ferguson 1994, Gee & Maden 1988, Heller with Edwards 1992, Kogan 1994, Ranson 1992, Ranson & Tomlinson 1994, Rao 1990, Tomlinson 1994). Some early reactions to ERA highlighted the need for an intrinsic local democratic element. Gee & Maden (1988:9-10) identify pluralism, participation and responsiveness as forming the “cornerstones” of local government and education. Structural and attitudinal change within LEAs is required to create a more ‘open’, responsive and participatory LEA. Gee and Maden (1988:11) argue the democratic and public benefits of LEAs based on a “non- centrist model” founded on the “values of justice, equality and community”. In the light of further changes, the Audit Commission acknowledged also the need for a democratic argument for LEAs. However, as this was not integral to Central Government thinking, the issue was not straightforward:

It is clear that, if the case for local democratic involvement in education is not to pass by default, it must be argued forcefully. (Howard Davies, Controller of the Audit Commission quoted in Heller with Edwards 1992:210).

The need for argument and justification was to become pronounced during the 1990s.

During and shortly after the passing of ERA, many commentators believed LEAs would remain (Audit Commission 1989, Gee & Maden 1988, Heller with Edwards 1992, Ranson 1992, Rao 1990, Riley 1992, 1996). Despite initial reservations, hostility or antipathy, LEAs began to reform and revive their role accordingly (Ranson 1992, Ranson & Tomlinson 1994, Riley 1992). Yet, it appeared that the Government did not wish to develop the role of the LEA as popularised by the Audit Commission and others (Kogan 1994). Instead further reform was to occur which questioned not only the role of the LEA but their rationale and existence. Speaking in 1991, Howard

Davies suggested *Losing an Empire* had been “overtaken” as “the environment has changed. The Government’s attitude to authorities has hardened” (in Heller with Edwards 1992: 131). Arguably, this rejection of outlined roles “is based on prejudice and not on logic” (Kogan 1994:24).

The 1990s and the Questioning of LEAs’ Existence

Between ERA and the mid- 1990s, fundamental changes in the position of LEAs occurred (Ranson 1992, Ranson & Tomlinson 1994, Riley 1996). The review of local government provided an opportunity for the reform or abolition of LEAs (Coopers & Lybrand Deloitte 1992, Ranson 1992, Riley 1996), this was linked to changes in local government finance (Cordingley & Riley 1992, Ranson 1992, Riley 1996) with the possibility that education could become centralised¹⁵ (Ranson 1992). Such a possibility was created by the promotion of universal opting out (*ibid*) embodied in *Choice and Diversity* (DfE 1992a) and subsequent 1993 *Education Act* which established the Funding Agency for Schools. The 1992 *Education (Schools) Act* altered LEA involvement in inspection, through the creation of OFSTED (*ibid*, Riley 1996). Since the Audit Commission’s Report in 1989, LEAs had lost several functions, particularly relating to F.E. colleges, inspection and the career service (Adams & Hunter 1994). The role of the LEA was seriously questioned.

Whether LEAs are necessary is a controversial issue. There is general agreement of a need for an ‘intermediate’ tier between central government and schools (Adams & Hunter 1994, Benn & Benn 1993, Coopers & Lybrand Deloitte 1992, Cordingley & Kogan 1993, Cordingley & Riley 1992, Ferguson 1994, Gee & Maden 1988, Heller with Edwards 1992, Kogan 1994, Ranson 1992, Ranson & Tomlinson 1994, Riley 1996, Tomlinson 1994). However, what is less clear is if this is necessarily a LEA. Conservative Governments of the 1990s did not support LEAs (Benn & Benn 1993). There is the issue of LEAs existing by virtue of historical and institutional legacy. Nevertheless, Ranson (1992:175) argues “If the LEA had not existed it would need to be invented”. Research and commentary suggests that there are both ‘pragmatic’ and ‘philosophical’ (Tomlinson 1994) arguments as to why “local government of education- in some form- is essential” (Benn & Benn 1993:67). It is the precise form

and nature of 'local government of education' that needs to be clarified. Support tends to be for a 'LEA' but in a reformed state, including changes in the operation and structure of LEAs towards more strategic and regulatory roles, but also, contrary to Government policy, an intrinsically and emphasised democratic role (Adams & Hunter 1994, Benn & Benn 1993, Cordingley & Kogan 1993, Cordingley & Riley 1992, Ferguson 1994, Ranson 1992, Ranson & Tomlinson 1994).

The first major challenge in the 1990s was the review of local government structure. Coopers & Lybrand Deloitte (1992) produced a report suggesting *The future role of local education authorities*¹⁶. The Report advocates that LEAs should not be dismantled. Rather previous strengths of LEAs, such as the capacity for local innovation and development, should be emphasised and promoted. The key role revolves around a notion of the 'enabling' authority, composed of "two key characteristics: partnership [for example with other "key players at the local level"] and strategic management" [including monitoring, performance review and delegation of duties to schools] (Coopers & Lybrand Deloitte 1992:7).

Coopers & Lybrand Deloitte (1992:2) argue that even if all schools opted out, "there is a number of key roles for which some form of local education authority is needed". Firstly, "Strategic policy and planning" (*ibid*: 10- 11), related to the premise that:

Insofar as education provision consists of more than the aggregation of separate institutions, there is a strong case for a local body with credibility and expertise to define, create and shape a vision of the sort of education service required to meet all the needs of local communities. (*ibid*: 10).

This is managerially and democratically beneficial. Secondly, linked to policy and planning, is the role of "Information and advice provision" (*ibid*: 11). This requires a "local" dimension (*ibid*). Thirdly, "Services to pupils and students" requiring a local focus but one wider than the "individual institution", e.g. school transport, regulatory duties, SEN, grants and adult education (*ibid*: 11). Fourthly, there are "Services to schools and colleges", requiring a local contact but preferably not a private contractor as the LEA can offer "professional" advice and 'consistent' support (*ibid*: 11- 12). Such benefits relate to the fifth role of "Quality assurance" also (*ibid*: 12). Finally, the

sixth role of “Funding and resource allocation” in which capacity the LEA offers not only a local link, but acts as ‘agent of central government’ (*ibid*: 12- 13). Therefore, the ‘enabling’ role envisaged by Coopers & Lybrand Deloitte (1992) is relatively wide encompassing not only strategic management and regulatory roles, but also service provision and democratic functions. Although universal opting out will not necessarily occur, even in this scenario a vital role exists for the LEA, in any less extreme or transitory scenarios, the case must be stronger. Coopers & Lybrand Deloitte’s (1992) final recommendations emphasise the democratic nature of LEAs. LEAs are necessary and should be “elected”, “larger rather than smaller” and “part of local government” (*ibid*: 3). This appears counter to the Government’s intentions, although in the short term the government retained the elected and local government elements.

In the 1990s, it appeared universal opting out and the diminution of LEAs was to be pursued with vigour by the Government (Ranson & Tomlinson 1994). The “case” for the LEA had to be carefully argued (Ranson 1992, Tomlinson 1994). The “*pragmatic or functional arguments*” (Tomlinson 1994:12) suggest there are functions which cannot be undertaken effectively at either school or central government level, hence the need for an ‘intermediate tier’ (*ibid*, Ferguson 1994, Kogan 1994). Schools want LEAs to retain certain functions, especially to save head teachers becoming administrators and not ‘educators’ (Kogan 1994, Ranson & Tomlinson 1994). There are functions that should *not* be carried out at school- level:

Chief among these is critical external advice and external support for the professional development of staff, the development of the curriculum and organisational development. (Tomlinson 1994:12).

Such functions cannot be left to market forces (*ibid*). Also there is “the need for innovation beyond and outside the school” (*ibid*: 13). The capacity for LEAs to fulfil this is considered a strength (Coopers & Lybrand Deloitte 1992, Heller with Edwards 1992, Ranson 1992) and emerges from the LEAs capacity to create ‘linkages’, ‘networks’ and ‘partnerships’ with those involved in and affected by education. Lastly, “on grounds of equity and effectiveness certain functions must be organised not by the school but beyond the school”, e.g. school admissions criteria, financial processes and controls, plus planning school provision (Tomlinson 1994:23). Kogan (1994:23)

stresses a “planning frame” which address needs at different levels. It is unrealistic and impractical to suggest that either schools or central government could fulfil effectively these ‘functional’ roles, therefore there is a ‘case’ for an intermediate tier (Tomlinson 1994, Kogan 1994).

Ranson (1992) argues that the ‘case’ for the LEA combines pragmatic and philosophical elements. Firstly, “education is inescapably a system” (*ibid*: 175), due to being comprehensive, life- long and the nature of learning. In promoting the “system of learning” (*ibid*), LEAs have a “pre- eminent role” in establishing the values, purpose and quality of the education system (*ibid*: 176- 177)¹⁷. Ranson (*ibid*: 177) perceives LEAs as “the necessary linchpin” in establishing “partnerships” within the education community (also Tomlinson 1994). Secondly, LEAs have a vital role in “the system of local management” (*ibid*) based upon their strategic and regulatory functions. Ferguson (1994:28) argues that LEAs do not ‘manage’ schools, they ‘manage’ the system. LEA support is essential to good management and consequent improvements in the education system (Ranson 1992:177- 180). Such a process extends beyond individual schools:

The quality of learning in any one institution depends upon characteristics that have to be managed at the level of the system as a whole. (*ibid*: 179).

Kogan (1994:23) indicates the systemic nature of education, arguing the need for LEAs as schools cannot operate in “so atomised and disjointed a system” as universal GMS. Ranson (1992) argues education is a local and national system. Even with LMS and GMS, there remain functions whereby: “only a local process can manage the system with economy and effectiveness”, encompassing managerial and educational benefits (*ibid*: 182). A national “framework” is rejected as “remote... less sensitive... and less flexible” to the needs of the local community (*ibid*).

However, argument needs to be developed beyond simply the need for “local administration” (*ibid*). Hence, the need for “local democracy” and a “system of local government” (*ibid*), linked to issues of accountability, democracy, citizenship and community. Many commentators identify a crucial ‘case’ for LEAs as residing in the need for a local democratic body to be involved in the education system (Adams &

Hunter 1994, Benn & Benn 1993, Bogdanor 1994, Cordingley & Riley 1992, Ferguson 1994, Gee & Maden 1988, Heller with Edwards 1992, Kogan 1994, Ranson 1992, Ranson & Tomlinson 1994, Riley 1996, Tomlinson 1994). The alternative 'democratic' agencies of governing bodies, central government, DFE and 'quangos' are ineffective and inappropriate (Benn & Benn 1993, Kogan 1994, Riley 1996). Against European trends towards "decentralisation" and "subsidiarity", local democratic control is essential to ensure "legitimacy" and to fulfil "moral " and "educational purpose" (Bogdanor 1994:200- 205).

Since early debates about the necessity of local government, a crucial link between local democracy, local government and education has been argued (Hill 1974). This thesis has been promoted in contemporary writings (Adams & Hunter 1994, Benn & Benn 1993, Bogdanor 1994, Ferguson, 1994, Ranson 1992, Ranson & Tomlinson 1994, Tomlinson 1994). Ferguson (1994:27) argues the Government's recent policies do not "address these fundamental and enduring issues about education, citizenship and government". While the Government promotes a certain view of 'citizenship' in the Citizen's Charter, the education policies of *Choice and Diversity* are counter to such developments (Ferguson 1994, Tomlinson 1994). The historical legacy and values of local democracy, local government and education are perceived as threatened. The Government policies emphasise the individual, though not necessarily as a citizen. In ensuring individual rights, it is posited that LEAs can offer support and defence (Heller with Edwards 1992, Kogan 1994, Ranson & Tomlinson 1994). This is crucial to a democratic system and offers a "moral justification" for LEAs (Heller with Edwards 1992:211- 212). Education is not merely a 'private' good, it is also a 'public' one (Tomlinson 1994). Hence, LEAs have a crucial function in securing 'collective rights' and providing 'equity' and 'balance' with individual rights (Heller with Edwards 1992, Kogan 1994, Ranson & Tomlinson 1994). This leads to the notion of the LEA as a vital champion of "community rights" adjudicating educational value conflicts (Cordingley & Riley 1992:160). The 'community' nature of education becomes the defining feature (*ibid*). This notion of 'community' requires a 'local' conception, spatially and psychologically, and a 'democratic' function of representation, participation and accountability.

It is argued there must be “ a renewed role for democratically accountable LEAs in future” (Benn & Benn 1993:67)¹⁸. Prescriptions for the future role of LEAs contain the need for strategy, regulation and service provision/ facilitation, plus they emphasise the need for democracy and ‘partnership’ (Adams & Hunter 1994, Cordingley & Riley 1992, Gee & Maden 1988, Ranson 1992, Riley 1996). This future ‘partnership’ must be based on “power- sharing” (Adams & Hunter 1994:198) and ‘interaction’ (Cordingley & Riley 1993:166- 1267), not on control and direction by the LEA (Ranson 1992, Riley 1996).

The Relationship between LEAs and Schools

A study of ‘roles’ is limited if not allied to a consideration of ‘relationships’. There is little empirical research that directly addresses the impact of recent reforms on the *relationship* between LEA and school. An evaluation of initial LMS commented:

The change in role for LEAs has brought with it a change in relationship between themselves and their schools. From being perceived as branches of the LEA, schools have become consumers of LEA services... As LMS evolves, so the relationship between schools and their LEAs is changing. Many schools seem to appreciate the services provided more than in the past. But at the same time they are becoming more hard- headed about what is best for them. (DfE 1992b:30- 32).

This is similar to the need to develop a changed purchaser/ provider relationship (Cordingley & Kogan 1993) inherent in the development of an ‘internal market’ (Levacic 1992,1995). In such a conception, the LEA is in a ‘market’ relationship rather than a traditional hierarchy. The shift in relationship requires changed practices and perceptions. Making the school a ‘consumer’ of the LEA, places the LEA in a precarious situation (Levacic 1995). LEAs will have to move from ‘intervention’ to ‘influence’, developed and accepted through the creation of “networking and partnership” with those at school- level (Riley 1996:100). In particular, the relationship between LEA and head teacher requires development (Foreman 1989).

Ranson (1992) argues the 'market' relationship should not dominate and weaken LEAs. LEAs need to prove education is a 'system' in which they have a beneficial role:

The LEA can make the new system work to the benefit of clients and customers, but it must assert itself to realise this end... Although schools and colleges are accorded new powers so that they become quasi- autonomous institutions within an LEA each of the LEAs in this study believes firmly that unless they perceive themselves as parts of an interdependent whole which is led by the LEA then the quality of education for all will founder. The challenge for the LEA is to assert a new style of leadership which wins the commitment and enthusiasm of schools and colleges to a shared agenda of reform and renewal of learning quality. The core values of the new management of education are: strategy, partnership, the enabling role, networking and public accountability. (*ibid*: 164).

The LEA must 'network' in order to establish its role composed of management, market and governance issues.

There are political and value judgements about the future relationship (Levacic 1995). A central tension is between a system based on the 'market' or 'social democracy' (Ranson 1994). There are practical issues also, e.g. the need for support and development between the levels (Foreman 1989). Complex sets of relationships are emerging between schools and LEAs revolving around notions of markets, hierarchy and networks (Levacic 1995, Raab 1994). Diverse relationships are emerging also between schools, between the LEA and other local government functions, and between the LEA and community for example (Arnott *et al* 1993b, Bullock & Thomas 1997, Busher & Saran 1993, Cordingley & Riley 1992, DfE 1992b, Levacic 1995). Discerning the nature of these relationships requires practical, political and perceptual questions.

Comparing Devolving School Management in England and Scotland

The movement to devolving school management is becoming an international 'mega-trend' (Caldwell & Spinks 1992), however its political linkage with 'markets' and 'managerialism' within Britain is relatively unique (Bullock & Thomas 1997) and may

be further distinguished between England and Scotland, where the latter is more reluctant to accept an 'education market' (Arnott 1993, Adler *et al* 1996, 1997, Deem 1994, Munn 1997a, Raab 1993b, Paterson 1997, Pignatelli 1994). One study comparing the Scottish and English experiences of devolving school management has been undertaken (Adler *et al* 1994, Arnott & Bailey 1995, Arnott & Munn 1994, Arnott *et al* 1996, Raab *et al* 1997). This provides empirical evidence, but develops this influenced by broader conceptual and theoretical issues such as markets, management, governance, citizenship and participation, as advocated by Raab (1993a, b, 1994). It provides a test of 'Scottish distinctiveness' by comparison with England.

The system of education is undergoing change and the traditional notions of "partnership" have been challenged and eroded (Raab *et al* 1997:142). Rather the policy of devolving school management derives from the Government's "market ideology" (*ibid*). Thus, the linking of issues of 'market', 'management' and 'governance'. DSM and LMS are not the only changes affecting the education system, therefore a broad focus is adopted. Although the policy themes are common throughout Britain, they may be operationalised differently in Scotland and England. Specifically, for DSM/LMS, the differences outlined by Raab *et al* (1997: 143- 144) are:

LMS was introduced in England by legislation ...reinforced by prescriptive administrative guidelines, whereas DSM was introduced in Scotland by more flexible guidelines without prior legislation.

LMS began to be implemented in 1990, whereas the first phase of DSM began only in 1994, with full implementation across all schools scheduled for 1998. However, Strathclyde Region... had introduced its own scheme in 1990...

Parents constitute a majority of the membership of school boards in Scotland, whereas they have no such majority on school governing bodies. Teachers are represented on both governing bodies and school boards, but local authority nominees can only sit on the former. Head teachers are the powerful professional advisers to school boards in Scotland, but are members of governing bodies in England.

Whereas in England the governing bodies have been given statutory powers on a range of matters including staffing, curriculum, and discipline, in Scotland school boards have a largely consultative role and broadly analogous powers have been devolved to the head teacher.

Scottish education authorities have more flexibility than their English counterparts in applying their own funding formulae and in devising schemes of delegation to schools. In England, a fixed minimum proportion (80%) of a school's budget is allocated on the basis of pupil numbers weighted for several factors, whereas in Scotland the guidelines require only that the "bulk of funding" must be allocated on this basis.

The proportion of education authorities' school budgets delegated to schools must be at least 80% in Scotland, but 90% in England.

School budgets are delegated to the governing body in England, but to the head teacher in Scotland.

Scottish schools receive actual salary costs while English schools receive average salary costs calculated across the authority as a whole.

Alongside these "supply- side differences", there are "demand- side differences" also (*ibid*: 144). Firstly, in Scotland, pupils are initially allocated to a school by the EA requiring parents to make a "placing request" if they wish their child to attend a different school, whereas in England most LEAs do not place children, therefore parents "express a preference at the outset" (*ibid*). Secondly, there are allegedly closer links between Scottish secondary schools and their associated primaries, hence children tend to progress from primary to associated secondary within their locality, unlike England. There are "contextual differences". Firstly, "all state secondaries in Scotland are non-selective and almost all are coeducational", in England there is greater variety of schools (*ibid*). Secondly, only one secondary has opted out in Scotland, compared to over "one in six secondaries in England" (*ibid*). Finally, Scotland's local government system was fully reorganised to create single- tier authorities. There may be both variances and commonalties between devolving school management in Scotland and England.

The above issues are empirical ones also. A qualitative methodology is utilised¹⁹. The sample selected sought to explore variation: “along two dimensions- centralised/ decentralised decision making and strong/ weak parental influence” (Raab *et al* 1997:145). Lothian, Strathclyde and Newcastle EAs were selected. Within each, four schools were selected to represent a “range of circumstances” (*ibid*)²⁰. All schools were secondary sector only. Therefore, within certain limits, the research sought to identify the existence of variations and commonalties across a range of circumstances and comparisons. The “consequences of policies” (*ibid*) are explored around three issues.

1. Enhancing Competition Among Schools

Raab *et al* (*ibid*: 148) provide evidence that “competition among schools in all three areas is somewhat limited”, but not non- existent:

Most schools attempted to increase their “market share” by attracting more pupils, to alter the composition of their pupil body, or to increase resources by other means. (*ibid*: 146).

This is argued to “have an impact on... the relationship between education producers and consumers” (*ibid*). However, ‘marketing’ was mainly “presentational” (*ibid*) or “cosmetic” (Adler *et al* 1994:17), e.g. newsletters and media activity. Nevertheless, some “substantive changes” existed, e.g. attempts to change the status of the school, curriculum organisation, introduction of streaming and an emphasis on discipline, school uniform and attendance (Raab *et al* 1997:147). The ‘market’ did not operate purely to facilitate consumer choice, rather ‘producers’ retained influence. In all the authorities:

schools pursuing increased numbers wanted pupils who would enhance the school’s reputation and its position in the performance tables: in essence, middle- class children. (*ibid*).

Furthermore, in Newcastle, with English age- weighted pupil formula, older pupils were sought. ‘Producer capture’ remains alongside problems of inequity in market systems.

There are variations in 'market activities' between schools and locations. All the English schools were competitive, and more so than in Scotland, where:

the salience of pupil numbers varied with the school's "market position". Schools in advantaged areas, which were typically filled to capacity, tended to underplay their strengths... Many schools in deprived areas resigned themselves to falling numbers, whilst the two schools that made the most energetic attempts to protect or increase pupil numbers were both located in the intermediate areas. (*ibid*).

Even when school closures were being promoted, competition between schools in Scotland did not become predominant.

Raab *et al* (1997) offer suggestions as to why competition is generally 'limited'. There is the 'Scottish distinctiveness' argument of cultural difference and resistance in Scotland towards "English- inspired policies" (*ibid*: 147- 148). However, there are issues affecting both Scotland and England. Firstly, "*established institutional patterns*", e.g. primary to secondary links and secondary head teacher networks (*ibid*: 148). Secondly, "*teachers' conceptions of professionalism*", which "may not accord with the ideology of the market" and cannot be easily "overridden" (*ibid*). Finally, "*parental (or pupil) "loyalty"*", or "inertia" to "their local school" which is "especially the case for schools situated in communities with a strong sense of local identity"(*ibid*). These impede an 'education market'.

2. Relationships Between Producers and Consumers

Similarities in the operation of school boards and governing bodies existed (*ibid*: 148):

Their main role was to support the school and its teachers.

There was little desire for greater participation in decision making either from parents or from teachers.

There was strong parental trust in the head teacher's professional expertise and judgement.

School boards and governing bodies were used by the head teacher to put pressure on the education authority on matters such as admissions limits, refurbishment, and budgetary allocations.²¹

The 'producers' of head teachers had the most prominent role in decision-making, not school board 'consumers'. Although there is evidence of the 'consumers' holding the EA 'producer' to account:

It may be, therefore, that it is the producers at national and local government level- officials and politicians- rather than the teachers who will most strongly feel the effects of new forms of accountability to parents. (*ibid*: 150).

Roles, relationships, and accountabilities are changing, but not necessarily as the Government anticipated.

The development of extensive lay participation appears unrealistic. Wider parental involvement was minimal and links with the school boards "were tenuous" (*ibid*: 149), except when a school was threatened with closure. Consequently:

whilst schools can be seen as an integral part of local civil society, there was only sporadic indication of an invigorated partnership amongst schools, parents, and the local community in the ways envisaged in government policy. (*ibid*).

The evidence suggests varying²² but limited shifts in the relationship between 'producers' and 'consumers'. The education system appears to be caught between the old 'triangular partnership' and an under-developed future 'network'.

3. Effects Upon, and Relationships Among, Producers

The relationship between school and EA has altered, in particular between head teacher and EA. A key shift was in "financial matters" whereby "schools and head teachers have greater autonomy in determining expenditures" and the governors could "on occasion... flex their own muscles in dealings with the education authority" (*ibid*: 152). In Newcastle, there was evidence of a "strained" relationship between school and LEA concerning "financial issues". Whereas:

There is less evidence in Scotland of such strained relationships or of schools' lack of confidence in the education authority. (*ibid*).

Although if necessary Scottish schools would try to "mobilise" support to influence the EA (*ibid*, Arnott *et al* 1996). In Newcastle, a school was in the process of trying to

opt out, and the possibility and implications of opting out were prevalent in other schools' discussions with the LEA. In Scotland, opting out was not on the sample's agenda. Rather Reorganisation and its funding implications 'dominated'. Although Raab *et al* (1997:150) suggest that in the scenario of budget cuts and identification of school costs, opting out may "begin to appear more attractive". Nevertheless, "schools and education authorities can be allies as well as antagonists" (*ibid*: 151).

Officers were aware of the need to develop and protect their relationship with schools: the role of senior officials was seen, by themselves and heads, as defending and promoting the interests of schools within the political and administrative circles of the authority and beyond. (*ibid*: 150- 151).

Raab *et al* (1997) provide a brief consideration of the extent to which the notion of the 'enabling' authority is being realised. Their evidence is mixed and inconclusive. As no schools had opted out in the EAs studied, it is argued that "there was no strong evidence that the authorities were losing control" (*ibid*: 152). However, DSM/ LMS and CCT may weaken the service role of EAs:

Some schools are considering the purchase of services from commercial suppliers, for example, for staff development, school maintenance, and cleaning. (*ibid*).

There is no indication of how many schools equal 'some' nor how serious their intent is. Consequently, Raab *et al* (*ibid*) propose:

It may be that the main function of local authorities will be monitoring educational provision and standards through enhanced quality assurance procedures.

The 'future role' of the EA requires further research.

The research evidence is stronger in exploring changes at school- level (Arnott & Bailey 1995, Raab *et al* 1997). For teachers, DSM/LMS was "not a major issue in the day- to - day work", as concern centred on teaching and learning, "curriculum and assessment" (Raab *et al* 1997:151). Although, "teachers with experience of managing departmental budgets" identified benefits from DSM/ LMS - the school had "control of its own finances", ability "to plan and control their spending", "repairs were carried out

more quickly” and “it was easier to order material” (*ibid*). However, there were other changes occurring in teachers’ work that could be viewed negatively, e.g. worsening employment conditions, stress, monitoring and control, plus “line management structures were evolving”(*ibid*). The extent to which these can be attributed directly to LMS/DSM varies. Nevertheless, significantly ‘hierarchy’ and ‘de- professionalisation’ were developing in practice, alongside the rhetoric of ‘market’ and ‘empowerment’.

Head teachers are affected differently and acutely by DSM/LMS:

There are tensions between their traditional role as educational leaders concerned with curriculum development, teaching, and learning, and their new roles as financial managers.(*ibid*).

This was especially so in England, whereas in Scotland, “evidence is not so clear”(*ibid*):

Current concerns with educational issues in Scotland have emphasised the educational role of heads, who have been widely consulted about the nature, purpose, and implementation of curriculum reform. (*ibid*: 152).

A gap between ‘education’ and ‘management’ is not as pronounced in Scotland. The “style of headship” (*ibid*: 151) may be important also. This influenced the extent to which a gap in role between ‘educational’ and ‘non- educational’ issues was pursued and the manner in which the head teacher interacted with staff.

Changes are occurring in the education system as a result of devolving school management. Evidently, there are ‘similarities’ across the research sites. Nevertheless, there are important differences and variations also, e.g. between Scotland, England, and varying socio-economic locations. In seeking further to understand this empirical evidence, Raab *et al* (1997:153) explore the “Implications For Theory” in “four overlapping domains”. They consider the utility of and issues related to ‘Internal or ‘quasi’ markets’, the ‘new public management’, ‘professionalism and accountability’, and ‘participation, citizenship and civil society’. In all cases, the existing theories offer some illumination but are not “fully satisfactory” (*ibid*), requiring development due to empirical evidence.

Evaluation of Issues Arising From the Research Findings

The research literature suggests that in general devolving school management is a policy to be 'welcomed' (Adler *et al* 1996, 1997, Benn & Benn 1993, Bullock & Thomas 1997, Cordingley & Kogan 1993, DfE 1992b, Kogan 1994, Levacic 1995, Ranson & Tomlinson 1994, Wilson *et al* 1995). An increasing majority of head teachers perceives benefits from LMS (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Levacic 1995). Even authors who criticise the undermining of the LEA embarked upon by the Government, perceive LMS as beneficial (Benn & Benn 1993, Cordingley & Kogan 1993, Kogan 1994, Ranson & Tomlinson 1994). However, many writers are critical of the precise form that devolving management has taken in Britain, especially English LMS (Kogan 1994, Levacic 1995, Ranson & Thomas 1989, Simon 1992, Thomas 1990, Williams 1995).

The benefits identified relate to the delegation of financial and decision-making responsibilities. Schools enjoy the flexibility afforded by delegated budgets, plus the sense of ownership and capacity for local and targeted decision-making and planning (Adler *et al* 1996, 1997, Bullock & Thomas 1997, DfE 1992b, Levacic 1995, Wilson *et al* 1995). Savings made at school-level can be redeployed. The new system of financial decision-making, allocation of resources, ordering of supplies and selection of services is less inefficient than the old system (Bullock & Thomas 1997, DfE 1992b, Levacic 1995). Within the school, the budget is used for improvements to the school's premises and physical environment (Bullock & Thomas 1997, DfE 1992b, Levacic 1995, Wilson *et al* 1995). There is the capacity to target better use of resources and staff, suggesting devolving management has improved the managerial and financial activities of the school (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Levacic 1995).

However, as the HMI evaluation posits devolving school management is "not wholly benign" (DfEb 1992:35). Implementation problems persist, e.g. I.T., formula funding and staff training (Audit Commission 1988, Bullock & Thomas 1997, DfE 1992b, Lee 1990, Levacic 1995, Wilson *et al* 1995). HMI reported the difficulty experienced in managing budgets and the considerable stress and anxiety created by LMS (DfE 1992b). Schools have not fully developed their financial management and are

proceeding cautiously (Bullock & Thomas 1997, DfE 1992b, Levacic 1995). Considerable upheaval and shifts in staffing have occurred (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Levacic 1995). For senior managers in schools, increasing amounts of time are involved in financial and managerial issues, diminishing time spent on educational issues and contact with the classroom (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Levacic 1995). For teachers, the lack of involvement in decision-making and the emergence of a 'dual labour market' have created insecurity (Bowe & Ball 1992, Bullock & Thomas 1997, Levacic 1995). Increases in class sizes affect teachers and pupils (Bullock & Thomas 1997). There are problems in the practicalities of devolving school management, the managerial competencies it requires, the impact on people and importantly the implications for the educational experience.

The Government's aim in devolving school management was that it would improve the 'standards' of teaching and learning (DfE 1988). However, the linkage is complex and "evidence mixed" (Bullock & Thomas 1997:217). It is difficult to establish direct causal links and to model schools as organisations 'producing' teaching and learning (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Levacic 1995, Wilson *et al* 1995). Nevertheless, some investigation into the links between LMS and teaching and learning has been undertaken (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Levacic 1995). Bullock & Thomas's (1997:155) research indicates that roughly half of head teachers believe that "*Children's learning is benefiting from LM*"²³. However, there was substantially less agreement that "*As a direct result of LM, standards of education have improved in my school*" (*ibid*: 156)²⁴, especially in small schools and by teachers in all schools²⁵. This suggests those closest to teaching and learning are more critical of LMS. It suggests also 'inequities' in the outcomes of LMS relating to the scale of school which impacts upon its "financial circumstances" and "resource context" (*ibid*: 165). The impact of devolved management on teaching and learning is 'mixed' and varied depending on the perspective of the interviewee and the nature of the school. LMS had "enhanced provision" within the school (Bullock & Thomas 1997:157). Due to LMS "improved environment and resources" had "indirect benefits for children" (*ibid*: 162). The "flexibility to target resources" was perceived as beneficial also (*ibid*: 160). However, the extent to which LMS improved the resource of staff is more dubious (Bullock &

Thomas 1997, Levacic 1995). At present, LMS affects teaching and learning only in a “marginal” way (Bullock & Thomas 1997: 220). It may influence the input and intermediate output, but LMS is “not sufficient to guarantee” changes in process and outcome (Levacic 1995:105). The Scottish research produced similar findings and issues (Adler *et al* 1996, Wilson *et al* 1995). Whether the economic and managerial model of devolving school management ever can move beyond improving “efficiency on the input side” (*ibid*: 162) is contentious, but would require the development of greater teacher participation, professional development, plus a critical and educational perspective (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Levacic 1995).

The changes generated by devolving school management and wider educational reform affects local government. The future role of EAs is being challenged and changed. The traditional purpose of EAs was to ensure benefits in terms of *education* and *governance*, through their democratic and service provider roles. These purposes are eroded and questioned by current Government policy. Notions of *markets* and *management* promote a radically changed role for EAs. Hence, the need for empirical study. In practice, the Government’s prescriptions of markets and management are not being fully realised and are often operating in imperfect and unintended ways. Hence, the development of notions of ‘quasi- markets’ and ‘non- rational’ management. There are tensions between advocacy of market choice yet strategic management. Furthermore, there are tensions with the differing values, needs and nature of *education* as evident at school- level, plus the continuing nature of *governance*, which may require EA- level involvement. To assume that ‘markets’ and ‘management’ as embodied in devolving school management are unproblematic, pragmatic and practicable is simplistic and naive.

The role of the school and the EA is changing. Although not always as anticipated, e.g. in the lack of rational management and participation at school- level or the incomplete development of the ‘enabling EA’. The literature on devolving school management is stronger on the implications for schools than EAs. Hence, there is need to develop this work, especially in Scotland. Consequently, there is a need also for greater investigation into the changing *relationships* between schools and EAs. It

appears that simplistic assumptions of 'market' mechanisms are problematic, requiring a broader analysis of 'markets', 'hierarchies' and 'networks' (Levacic 1992,1995, Raab 1994).

The literature on devolving school management is extensive and varied. There is a mass of practical findings concerning the reform of the education system, however many analyses are pragmatic, prescriptive and a- political (e.g. Wilson *et al* 1995). There is a need to understand that the reform of the education system is a political process, influenced by values, perceptions, power, roles and relationships. The visions of 'market' and 'management' prescribed are not neutral in origin or implications. Hence, the need for a more thorough analysis. Bowe & Ball (1992) are strong in this respect but empirically limited due to only one school being researched. Furthermore, the wider role of local government involvement in education and governance is not adequately explored. Writers focussing on LEAs rectify this partially, although they make little connection with the school- level. Raab *et al's* (1997) work is a development in linking consideration of 'markets' and 'management' inspired reform to the implications for 'education governance'. Nevertheless, there remains scope for theoretical development of this work. There is an empirical gap also, as there is a great need to empirically study the role and nature of EAs in Scotland, plus their relationships with schools, including the primary sector. The existing research indicates that local government reorganisation may affect the education system (Raab *et al* 1997, Wilson *et al* 1995) but is not a focus of study. There is scope for further empirical study and theoretical development concerning the roles and relationships of schools and EAs.

Within a general trend and overarching similarities, differences in the operation of the education systems persist between Scotland and England (Adler *et al* 1994, 1996, 1997, Arnott *et al* 1996, Clark & Munn 1997, Raab *et al* 1997). Thus, some of the detailed issues identified in the English literature may have little relevance to my empirical study in Scotland. For example, the precise nature of AWPU funding, average- actual staffing costs and the national curriculum which are argued to generate market forces in England do not exist in Scotland. It may be that universal terms such

as 'market' are problematic and unrealistic (Bowe & Ball 1992). Intra-national variations are possible also. The existing literature indicates variations between scale of school, primary/ secondary sectors, socio-economic circumstances and 'market position' (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Busher & Saran 1993, Levacic 1995, Raab *et al* 1997). However, there is a need to explore further the existence of 'variation' and 'commonality'. Increasingly, global prescriptions of 'markets' and 'management' are being advocated as 'mega-trends' (Caldwell & Spinks 1992). It is necessary to consider the nature of these policies and prescriptions. Yet there is the empirical issue that such policies may be resisted, re-interpreted or operate in numerous and varying ways. Policy is a process in which "the implementation of policy may only imperfectly reflect the intentions of policy makers, or may reshape and even negate policy aims and objectives" (Raab *et al* 1997:155).

In the process and practice of DSM and Reorganisation, the existence of a 'Scottish' dimension remains as does notions of 'partnership'. However, the policy is promoted in global terms of 'efficiency' achieved through 'markets' and 'managerialism'. This is the 'efficiency' discourse, which must be critiqued, deconstructed and compared with emerging practices and perceptions. In short, there is a need to consider the theoretical nature of the promotion of 'markets' and 'management'. It is necessary to explore and criticise the nature and potential of such arguments. Furthermore, there is need for detailed and extensive study of the translation of prescription and policy into practice and the perception of those involved.

¹ Adler *et al* (1996, 1997) adopt a qualitative case study approach. In each EA, three schools are selected to represent a comparable socio-economic range. 95 interviews were conducted- 77 at school-level (10 head teachers, 5 deputies, 3 assistants, 39 principal teachers, 10 unpromoted teachers, 9 admin/ clerical staff, 1 technical staff) and 18 at school board level. Wilson *et al* (1995) utilise documentary analysis, preliminary 'sensitising' semi-structured interviews (with 3 area finance officers, 2 head teachers and 1 deputy head), and followed by 6 focus group meetings with teachers and support staff.

² Levacic (1995:30- 37) argues that through market mechanisms and formula funding greater *procedural equity* may arise but generally not *distributional equity*. In particular concern has focussed upon the impact of LMS on special educational needs (SEN) (Bowe & Ball 1992, Bullock & Thomas 1997, DFE 1992, Levacic 1995, Maden 1992). Thomas & Bullock's (1992) analysis of

Additional Educational Needs (AEN), including factors such as inner city deprivation, suggests that these areas can be enhanced or undermined depending upon the precise budgeting and formula approach adopted by the LEA.

³ Research by Bullock & Thomas (1997) and Levacic (1995) suggests that the salary implications are a consideration in the appointment of staff

⁴ The HMI evaluation of LMS indicated a tendency towards the appointment of younger, less experienced and cheaper staff (DfE 1992b). Within schools, Levacic (1995:29) proposes that a “dual labour market” is arising. There has been an increase in of temporary contracts and part-time work. Funding has been directed away from teachers to non- teaching staff. There have been increases in teacher redundancies, early retirements, class sizes and pupil- teacher ratios.

⁵ In response to the statement: “ As a result of LM we are actively seeking to attract more pupils”, only 31% of primary heads and 53% of secondary heads agreed in. (Bullock & Thomas 1997:192).

⁶ A “tension between size and effectiveness” (Bowe & Ball 1992:49) exists, whereby a small increase in pupil numbers may push up class sizes but be insufficient to justify a new teacher or separate class.

⁷ According to Bullock & Thomas’s research and analysis explains that (1997:187): The average reduction in a primary school’s roll is 12 pupils equalling “ a budgetary loss of £10, 236, or a 3.65 per cent reduction in 1990/ 91”. The average increase is 14 pupils, equivalent to £11,942 or 4.25% of the 1990/ 91 budget. In the secondary sector, the average decline is 25 pupils, i.e. £38,135 or 3.4% in 1990/ 91, whereas the average increase of 53 pupils would bring £80,825 or 5.72% of the budget in the same year.

⁸ LMS, as posited by Coopers & Lybrand (1988), was not intended to cut costs and indeed may incur greater costs. However, Levacic (1995:29) explains that the DfE’s view of LMS was: “to use more efficiently that money made available to education” .Changes in school funding and budget rules, varying Government statistics and inaccurate information make it problematic to discern comparisons over time. The evidence suggests a small increase in real resources to education has occurred, but this does not allow for increases in pupil rolls and marked variations between LEA education budgets (Levacic 1995).

⁹ Bowe & Ball (1992) identify a linkage between the ‘rational management model’ and the exercise of control also, developing a critique on this basis.

¹⁰Political perspectives highlight the importance of people, interest groups and power. Rather than individualised and rational decision- making, groups compete and conflict over decisions, the outcome of which is due to “the interplay of power, involving negotiation and bargaining.” (Levacic 1995:81). The critical perspective argues the interplay of power is related to the nature of the wider capitalist system. From an ambiguity perspective, rationality is unattainable due to the existence of indeed ambiguity, e.g. lack of information, external constraints, etc. Economic models are problematic for schools where market criteria of input, output, profit motive, etc are absent if not irrelevant. Hence, rather than ‘rational’ decision- making, incrementalism and ‘muddling through’ will arise (Lindblom 1959, 1979). The existence of ambiguity is central to the ‘garbage can’ model (Cohen & March 1974) where the changing and multiple problems and potential solutions creates an ongoing process of confusion and ‘irrational’ behaviour. Sequential and rational stages are rendered futile in such circumstances.

¹¹ Ball (1993) views this discourse as ‘cultural engineering’ attempting to construct an ‘enterprise culture’, re- structuring school as commercial enterprises in a relationship with customers.

¹²Nevertheless, she draws upon interview evidence from only four education officers within one LEA, compared to 78 people interviewed at school- level.

¹³The educational psychologists and educational welfare services are 'protected' under LMS, however teachers wished the retention of other educational services also, e.g. educational support service, literacy support and SEN (Bullock & Thomas 1997:111- 112). There was the concern that LEAs should have a "central role in professional development" (*ibid*: 112), e.g. retention of LEA advisory staff.

¹⁴From organisational analysis, Cable (1988:13) explains the distinction:

U- form firms are functionally specialised, hierarchically arranged organisations... there is a single peak co-ordinator (a person or board of directors to whom are responsible the heads of specialise departments dealing with production, marketing, purchasing, finance, etc). Within each functional area, there may be several further horizontal layers of responsibility and vertical demarcation of more finely specialised tasks. In the M -form firm, production activities are broken down into a number of quasi- autonomous operating divisions... The activities are co-ordinated via a general office, assisted by an elite staff, which undertakes strategic planning and resource allocation among the divisions, and exercise a characteristic form of monitoring and control over them. (Quoted in Levacic 1992).

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As advocated by the Secretary of State for the Environment.

¹⁶Commissioned by the Association of County Councils

¹⁷ The functions outlined by Ranson (1992) are similar to those by Coopers & Lybrand Deloitte (1992).

¹⁸ A very similar point is made by Cordingley & Riley (1992:166- 167) who argue that the intrinsic role of future LEAs must develop from the function of 'democratic accountability'.

¹⁹Four key methods were adopted: "(a) observations of governing- body and school- board meetings in each school; (b) semi-structured interviews with selected members of boards and governing bodies, the head teacher, selected members of staff, key politicians and officials at local and national levels, and pressure- group leaders; (c) a telephone survey of a small sample of parents at each school; and (d) analyses of minutes and of other official and unofficial documents". (Raab *et al* 1997:146).

²⁰ "an area of high socio-economic deprivation; an affluent area with mainly owner- occupied housing; and two intermediate types of area, one of mainly post-war public housing and on with a traditional working- class population". (Raab *et al* 1997:145).

²¹ A paper by Adler *et al* (1994) provides detailed consideration of the impact of DSM on school boards.

²² Raab *et al* (1997:149) suggest that some differences exist between school boards and governing bodies due to: "the socio-economic characteristics of the schools' catchment areas, to their market position, and to the different arrangements for devolved management". There are differences relating to "cultural capital", "ability to mobilise external links" and "different patterns of learning" (*ibid*).

²³ Overall, the number of head teachers agreeing the "Children's learning is benefiting from LM" were 47% in the primary sector and 50% in the secondary sector by 1993 (Bullock & Thomas 1997:154).

²⁴ In 1993, only 30% of primary head teachers agreed that there were direct benefits from LMS for educational standards (Bullock & Thomas 1997:156).

²⁵ Only 31% of teachers believed that LMS was benefiting children's learning, and only 16% thought that LMS had directly improved educational standards. At head teacher level, on the first issue, 80%

in large secondaries agreed but only 30% in smaller secondary schools. On the second issue, 65% of heads in larger secondaries agreed, but only 32% in smaller secondaries.

CHAPTER 7
THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL ISSUES
IN THE STUDY OF THE CHANGING EDUCATION SYSTEM

The present reform of education and local government systems is different from the previous principles and discourse of 'partnership', 'consensus' and 'Scottishness' linked to 'egalitarianism' and 'democracy'. By reviewing the literature on Scottish and English experiences of devolving school management and the local government of education, it is apparent the promotion of 'markets' and 'management' were integral to reform from the 1980s onwards embodied in a discourse of 'efficiency'. This chapter seeks to explore the conceptual and theoretical dimensions of the discourse of 'efficiency' and implications for policy reform and practices within education and local government.

Since the 1970s, a shift to the right in education policy has occurred. Influential in such a transition was the prescriptions of the New Right¹, especially as popularised via 'Thatcherism'². This chapter considers the nature of New Right prescriptions, focussing particularly on those that espouse 'market' forces. Alongside such developments was the promotion of 'management' reform embodied in the prescriptions of 'New Public Management'. Hence, such developments shall be explored and critiqued. From both the New Right and New Public Management a discourse of 'economy', 'efficiency' and 'effectiveness' developed. The dimensions and implications of this discourse will be explored. Finally, criticism of the above in terms of its application for the education and local government systems will be considered. Alternative arguments for decentralisation will be highlighted. In practice, the potentially complex relationships of 'markets', 'hierarchy' and 'networks' emerging will be considered. A final evaluation and conclusion will be offered.

The 'New Right' and 'Markets'

The New Right does not represent a coherent theory; rather it is a broad school of thought offering economic, political and social prescriptions and analyses (Jordan 1993). The most prominent and prolific manifestations accord with the combined yet differing emphasis of neo-liberalism, promoting individualism, and neo-

conservatism, advocating state control (Ashford 1993, Brown & Sparks 1989, Gamble 1988, Jordan 1993, King 1987). The overarching prescriptions are similar: “more market, less state and a different state” (George & Wilding 1994:39). This involves recommendations for the future and criticisms of the past.

The origins of New Right thought draw on classical political economy (Buchanan 1983). However, from the 1960s and especially 1970s, the ‘New Right’ emerged as a school of thought criticising and seeking to reform the problems of governance and economy which became acute at this time:

two sorts of critique appeared in the 1970s. First, some political scientists characterised the polity as ‘ungovernable’ or ‘overloaded’. A second series of criticisms focussed specifically on the policy prescriptions of Keynesianism, arguing that they were fundamentally flawed and responsible partly for the economic problems of the current era; monetarism and supply-side economics were cited as alternatives. (King 1987:63).

In this developing critique, the writings of public choice, “the economic theory of politics” (Buchanan 1978:17), and the economic writings of Friedman and Hayek have been especially influential (Ashford 1993, Green 1987). The values of “individualism, liberty and property rights, and on inequality as the natural outcome of the workings of the market” (Mishra 1984:61) are endorsed³.

“Methodological individualism” is adopted by public choice, whereby “all phenomena are reducible to individual behaviour” (King 1987:94). Bureaucrats, politicians and voters are perceived as “egotistic, utility-maximising, rational self-interested actors” (*ibid*: 92). Bureaucrats are considered to be budget-maximisers (Boyne 1987, Downs 1957, Niskanen 1971, Tullock 1976). Hence, the bureaucratic process of “size maximisation” and “empire building” (Ashford 1993:32). Although “real financial inducements” may be absent (King 1987:103), Niskanen (1971:38) identifies the incentives of “salary, perquisites of the office, public reputation, power, patronage, output of the bureau, ease of making changes and ease of managing the bureau”:

Instead of bureaucrats being viewed as entirely altruistic (maximize social welfare), they are now seen as entirely selfish (maximize budgets subject to funding constraint)". (Heald 1983:113).

The "external constraints" on bureaucrats, such as by politicians and price mechanisms, are "represented as extremely weak" (*ibid*). A 'bilateral monopoly' exists between bureaucrat and politician (Niskanen 1971). Both have an incentive for government growth. Downs (1957) "conceptualised political parties as the equivalent of profit- seeking firms in the market- place" (King 1987:93). Consequently "political parties develop their policy objectives to achieve electoral success rather than the other way around" (*ibid*:100). The 'vote motive' (Tullock 1976) encourages politicians to promise increased public provision and expenditure generating government growth, but unwilling to pursue the harsher financial consequences. Inflation and taxation will be avoided and the economy manipulated (Heald 1983, King 1987, Mishra 1984). These policies and activities are based on short- term personal political gain not long- term economic stability and efficiency nor public interest. Yet, the public, i.e. voters, is responsible also for such developments. There is a desire for higher public provision, lower taxation and unawareness of financial consequences (Mishra 1984). Expansionary, inefficient and expensive public provision arises in the absence of cost awareness and the linkage of supply and demand created by market mechanisms. The impact of individual voters is intensified when individuals act together as interest groups, which prevent the "effective functioning of the market" (King 1987:64) and serve to manipulate and distort the economic order. Hence, Hayek proposed: "This 'unlimited democracy' can only be restricted by 'limiting the powers of government'" (Mishra 1984:60).

The cumulative effect of these self- interested individuals is a cycle of inappropriate and inefficient growth in public provision and government (Mishra 1984). Frustration results from the incapacity of government to aggregate individualised demands and interests into an acceptable universal policy (King 1987). Government overload "occurs when the demands made on the government far exceed its capacity to meet them effectively" (Mishra 1984:36). Thus, "modern governments have assumed vastly increased responsibilities", yet they "no longer have sufficient resources to meet this

enlarged range of activities” (King 1987:63). Freidman argued ‘government failure’ was rife (Ashford 1993). The expansionary and inefficient nature of government activity is highlighted by government growth, generating government overload resulting in government failure.

The solution is believed to lie in constitutional and economic reform, based on a strong but limited government and a free market economy. In the New Right analyses, it is not simply the ‘political’ actors which are criticised, as in public choice theory, but also the economic order, as in the writings of Hayek and Freidman⁴. There is a rejection of Keynesianism, which underpinned the ideal economic policy of post-war Britain, and an assertion of the benefits of a shift from state planning and intervention to a ‘free market capitalist economy’ (Heald 1983). Non-market provision is believed to be economically damaging and to offer a disincentive to wealth creation, e.g. high taxation and a ‘safety net’ creating a ‘dependency culture’ (George & Wilding 1994).

Whereas:

the market system is the greatest engine of economic growth making possible a more sophisticated, complex, efficient and responsive economy. (George & Wilding 1985:28).

The market ‘rewards those who strive and compete and ‘punishes’ those who ‘fail’ to participate in economic growth (George & Wilding 1994).

Such a ‘market’ system accords with and benefits human nature also:

people’ s and society’s need for individual responsibility and people’ s essential self- and family- centredness. Nothing depends on the fallible uncertainties of altruism and communal responsibility. (*Ibid*: 36).

A market system relies on individual responsibility of those requiring services and the demands of survival for those providing services (*ibid*). Similarly, “the New Right have great faith in individuals, and little faith in systems and institutions” (*ibid*:37). Markets facilitate personal choice that is integral to freedom (Heald 1983). Freidman (1962) traces an essential link between capitalism, freedom and democracy (Ashford 1993). George & Wilding (1994:27) explain:

New Right supporters argue that the market offers a more effective form of democracy by enabling everyone to make choices. The case for capitalism, Seldon concludes, 'is that the democracy of the market offers the masses more than the democracy of politics' (Seldon, 1990, p.103). To be deprived of choice is to be deprived of freedom and to be diminished as a person... the market can extend choice- it can give service users the power of exit not just 'the precarious power of voice' (Seldon, 1990, p.107).

The market system enables human dignity (*ibid*: 36). Hayek (1960, 1976) suggests the 'spontaneous order' of the market is preferable to state planned activity as 'liberty' and freedom can only be achieved where coercion is minimal (Ashford 1993). Economic freedom in the market system facilitates human freedom also. Despite the primacy of individualism and diversity, the market will provide a more cohesive social order:

The New Right... argue that society can be held together more securely by agreement about means than by a search for common ends. Secondly, the New Right believe that those who advocate a welfare state on the grounds of the need for shared social purposes fail to grasp the unifying potential of the market. Self- interest, they argue, following Adam Smith, can be a powerful force for co- operation. (George & Wilding 1994:17).

The market system is superior to planned government activity and intervention.

Through 'spontaneous order' and human 'liberty' a better order will emerge:

Liberty has instrumental value for Hayek because it makes best use of widely dispersed knowledge and provides for the unpredictable growth of knowledge. (Ashford 1993:27).

Hence, "the market is the best mechanism for discovering and co-ordinating dispersed knowledge and preferences" (George & Wilding 1994: 35- 36). In a market system, greater choice over types of service and greater price competition will ensure more appropriate and efficient services.

Nevertheless, belief in the supremacy of the market does not totally negate the role of the state. Rather a reformed, limited but strong state is to emerge:

What the anti- collectivists want is limitations on the sphere of the political system. Because of this they want a decentralisation of power... however, the state must be strong. General rules must be enforced... It is the sphere of activity not its power which must be limited. (George & Wilding 1985:32).

Even the most 'minimal' state should enforce and facilitate the market:

The framework- setting of the minimal state is its crucial function, encompassing:

- (1) The definition and enforcement of property rights, the maintenance of competitive markets and the preservation of internal order.
- (2) The organization of external defence. (Heald 1983:73).

Brown & Sparks (1989:xiv) explain⁵:

the neoliberal, 'minimal' state is no less coercive than its predecessors. Indeed, in some areas it is markedly more so. The conjunction of economic deregulation with public commitment to law and order, the family and social propriety concentrates state activities in areas of policing and surveillance.

Thus advocacy of decentralisation and centralisation of powers and activities.

There are some areas of public policy and provision where state provision or intervention is necessary, as market provision would be inappropriate and market failure would occur. Adam Smith proposed a role for the state providing major public works, due to the existence of 'externalities' (Mishra 1984). From the theory of externalities came the concept of public goods:

Samuelson... defined a pure public good as a good which exhibits both:

- (1) Non- rivalry in consumption: one person's consumption does not reduce the amount available for others.
- (2) Non- excludability: it is impossible to exclude from benefit a person who refuses to contribute to the cost. (Heald 1983:98).

The "prisoner's dilemma" indicates that in the case of public goods, individualised decisions and provision may be ineffective, hence the "need for government and rule enforcement" (King 1987:98). However, what constitutes public goods is open to interpretation. Education is controversial, many authors identify it as a 'public good', although this relies on a value- judgement (Grace 1994, Green 1987, Levacic 1993b,

Tooley 1994, Tomlinson 1994). Friedman argues there are conditions where state involvement “is reasonable and proper”, e.g. in cases of “natural monopolies which the state may provide without adverse economic effects on the market system” (George & Wilding 1994:38). For “free provision of services and facilities where it is simply impracticable or too expensive to organise such provision on a market basis”, government provision is advocated (*ibid*). Finally, “paternalistic provision for those not able to assume full responsibility for themselves is quite proper” (*ibid*), e.g. children. Where ‘market failure’ will occur, government provision is essential.

Nevertheless, the New Right does not believe in the continuing bureaucratic and monopolistic dominance of government provision. State provision must be only:

residual, minimal services, that is, safety net provision. That is all the state can efficiently, legitimately and properly provide. (*Ibid*: 38).

In the main, “the state’s role should be one of enabling rather than providing” and the old “destructive goals of equality and social justice” must be abandoned (*ibid*). Where state provision continues, it should be subject to competitive pressures, internally e.g. “competitive internal markets”, and externally, “non- monopolistic” relations (*ibid*:38-39). To remove disincentives and dependency, “state provision must be conditional not simply a right” (*ibid*: 39). While ‘residual’ and ‘minimal’ public provision may remain, it is to be placed in a conditional and competitive environment.

The New Right argue the welfare state in Britain has mistakenly sought to maintain the needs of wartime in peace time, emerging from the “malign... influence” of Keynes and Beveridge, driven by a mis- informed view of the economic and social order, and the inappropriate and utopian ideals such as social justice and equality (*ibid*:15- 20). The welfare state is not a market system and does not accord with, or facilitate, many of the essential features of a ‘free market capitalism’. Overall:

The New Right do not totally reject any role for the state in welfare, but their general attitude to the idea of the welfare state is one of suspicion and anxiety. The critique has many strands; it is leavened with fact but basically it is profoundly ideological, resting on instinctive beliefs about human nature, human capacity and the nature of economic and social order. (*Ibid*: 20).

Eight essential attitudes are discerned by George & Wilding (1994).

1. The impossibility of creating a comprehensive welfare state (*ibid*: 21).

Firstly, the Hayekian notion of 'spontaneous order' indicates the creation of a comprehensive and state planned welfare state is impossible and ill- advised. Secondly, the welfare state assumes the ability for "rational planning" (*ibid*), this requires knowledge of all facts, processes and outcomes. Such a belief is simplistic, ignoring the "complexity of economic and social life" (*ibid*: 22), impractical, all facts cannot be known, and ignores the limited capacity of human nature and "reason" (*ibid*). Thirdly, common agreement about "social purpose" and welfare ends cannot be made and should not be enforced (*ibid*).

2. Mistaken views of human nature and social order (*ibid*:22).

Humans are individualistic and selfish actors. Only the "discipline of insecurity and failure" (*ibid*: 23) will encourage personal responsibility and wealth creation. There must be the incentive of 'reward' and 'punishment' in a market rather than the disincentive and dependency created by the public sector. The assumption that individuals will be in "pursuit of a general social state of welfare" is mistaken (*ibid*). "Welfare state supporters have a far too optimistic view of human nature" and in inappropriate grasp of "social functioning" (*ibid*).

3. Mistaken Ideas about Welfare (*ibid*: 23).

The welfare state is based upon inappropriate values and associated functions, relating to liberty, social justice, rights and need. The welfare state puts "emphasis on the pursuit of equality and redistribution rather than on growth and wealth creation" (*ibid*). Whereas the New Right argue the need for the latter and necessary inequality. The welfare state ignores also the intrinsic existence of individualism and benefits of choice. Furthermore, "rights" are asserted rather than "responsibilities and obligations" (*ibid*: 25). The New Right are critical of the focus on "egalitarianism" which is more extensive than their perceived "raison d'être for a welfare state, that is, the relief of poverty" (*ibid*:24). Rather the welfare state is structured around a definition of "social problems" (*ibid*) which are perceived as 'solvable' and capable of "changing society"

(*ibid*: 26) through “a particular, narrow view of welfare” which emphasises “state provision of services” (*ibid*: 25). The New Right disagrees with the values and operation of the post-war welfare system.

4. The welfare state as a threat to freedom (*ibid*: 26).

Firstly, the welfare state requires government growth, which erodes individual freedom and responsibility. Secondly, the welfare state proposes and promotes a “vision of the ideal society” (*ibid*). This is coercive as it seeks to enforce a collective view of social ends. Thirdly, the welfare state promotes “egalitarianism”. This requires “redistribution” which is “inevitably coercive” as it is an “encroachment” on those from whom resources are taken (*ibid*: 27). Fourthly, the welfare state “is paternalistic and authoritarian” denying choice and therefore freedom (*ibid*). Finally, the welfare state is organised as “monopolistic organisation dominated by powerful bureaucracies and influential professional groups” (*ibid*). ‘Consumer’ ‘voice’ is weak and ‘exit’ non-existent. In all cases, the market is the preferred option.

5. The welfare state is seen as inefficient and ineffective (*ibid*: 28).

This relates particularly to the nature and provision of services:

The New Right link size with inefficiency and ineffectiveness and monopolies, by definition, come under the same condemnation. Without the spur of competition, there are no incentives to innovation or greater efficiency. (*Ibid*).

Politicians and bureaucrats are treated with scepticism, the latter holds excessive power and push towards “over-supply of services” (*ibid*: 29). Yet, there may be “insufficient supply” and “under-funding” within this trend to growth (*ibid*). In particular “with universal services, large amounts of expenditure go to those who do not need them” (*ibid*). There may be “unintended consequences” and “counterproductive effects” of welfare policies (*ibid*).

6. The welfare state is seen as economically damaging (*ibid*: 30).

The welfare state offers disincentives to wealth creation and increases wage demands on employers. Welfare states require high taxation and high public expenditure, which

are economically damaging. The 'unproductive' welfare state 'crowds out' economic and human resources from the economically productive private sector (King 1987).

7. The welfare state is seen as socially damaging (George & Wilding 1994: 31).

From the late 1980s, the New Right has emphasised the socially damaging aspects of the welfare state. It is believed to undermine "individual and social responsibility" (*ibid*: 31). The denial of choice is crucial. As people believe that the extent of their welfare function is to pay tax, 'social responsibility' is eroded as this is viewed the prerogative of the state. Consequently "mediating structures" (*ibid*: 34) between state and individual are 'damaged', e.g. community. 'Dependency' is created and 'social problems' manifest:

the moral hazards of social provision, that is, that by providing for certain social contingencies, the welfare state actually promotes the behaviour which leads to the conditions from which it seeks to protect people. Providing benefits for the unemployed increases unemployment. (*Ibid*: 33).

The welfare state is 'socially damaging' for human nature, encouraging social malaise.

8. The welfare state is seen as politically damaging (*ibid*: 34).

The welfare state will "undermine the authority of government" (*ibid*). Firstly, it encourages the idea that for every problem, there is a solution achievable through government policy and provision:

Governments, therefore, are led to assume responsibilities for policies that cannot succeed such as... equalising of educational opportunity. Failure is inevitable and failure means loss of standing and authority. (*Ibid*: 34- 35).

Furthermore:

... welfare state policies lead to the growth of powerful interest groups... government, therefore, loses power and legitimacy. (*Ibid*: 35).

When the government moves beyond the 'minimal state' model, government overload and failure occur, generating problems of legitimacy and authority.

These critiques of government activity and the welfare state indicate the need for reformed provision and practices. The central arguments being the need to create a free

market economy, emphasise individualism, and a reduced but strong role for the state. Privatisation and market forces are advocated (Ashford 1993). Nevertheless, especially in the notion of 'public goods', it is recognised that there may be services and circumstances where public provision must remain. However, within the remaining public sector, market forces are to be promoted. Thus:

The New Right support the introduction of market incentives and competition into those areas of the public sector which, for whatever reason, could not be privatised, in order to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of public expenditure. (Ashford 1993: 39 - 40).

Examples include the creation of internal markets in health and vouchers in education.

The New Right proposes reform of the education system. Green (1987:154) explains that "full- blooded libertarians... oppose not only government schools, but also compulsory schooling". However, most 'anti- collectivists' endorse "the case for a state provision of a compulsory minimum of education" (George & Wilding 1985:42).

Friedman (1962) posited a minimal government role in education:

There are two reasons for government to be involved. The first is that education has considerable 'neighbourhood effect'; and second is a paternalistic concern for the children of poor or irresponsible parents. A stable and democratic society could not be maintained, Friedman argues, without a degree of shared literacy, knowledge and values. To the extent that education contributes to the acquisition of such attributes, then others share in its advantages. (Green 1987:156).

Education fulfils both the 'public goods' and 'safety net' criteria of public provision.

However, education is not to be an unresponsive state bureaucracy. The "ideal answer" (Green 1987:157) would be privatisation. However, this would not fulfil the 'safety net' function. Hence, competition and private involvement are encouraged within the education system, which is overseen by the government and may include public provision. Friedman (1962) advocated education vouchers, enabling parents to exercise choice and stimulating competition (Green 1987). The private sector is involved through the assisted places scheme (George & Wilding 1994). Internal

markets between schools and within the education system stimulate competition and private sector activity (*ibid*). Parental power is to overcome the vested interest of bureaucrats (Quicke 1988), e.g. parent dominated governing bodies controlling schools (Green 1987). On the authoritarian side of the New Right, a traditional, national curriculum and associated testing is advocated (Quicke 1988). Overall, the EA is undermined and reformed (Quicke 1988, Raab 1993b) being treated as inefficient and ineffective (Gray 1994). If local government must remain, it should be small-scale, use charging, subject to competition, allow choice and use efficiency techniques (Midwinter & McGarvey 1993). Despite resistance to prescriptions from the New Right, within and out-with the Government (Quicke 1988, Raab 1993b), these policies have been influential in recent years. The overarching purpose is to stimulate competition in the public sector, involve the private sector, undermine professional and bureaucratic power, assert parental/ consumer/ individual power, and to redefine the role of the state. In short, a minimal but strong state and market forces.

Critique of the New Right

This is not to argue that the New Right has offered prescriptions for education and government that have become readily practised (Quicke 1988, Raab 1993b). The New Right can be criticised for the nature and content of their debate, plus the practical implications. Crucially, there is “a tendency to exaggerate and generalise on the basis of insufficient evidence” (Mishra 1984:53). Hence, “The New Right proceed by belief, instinct and assertion rather than a careful examination of often complex evidence” (George & Wilding 1994:40). This calls into question the adequacy and appropriateness of the New Right’s arguments.

George & Wilding (*ibid*) critique the “philosophical base” of the New Right. The fundamental value for the New Right is freedom. However, it is a negative conception, “the absence of coercion”, rather than the positive freedom of the ability to do something (*ibid*). In public choice, the market system is based on property rights which “confers freedom upon the propertied and unfreedom upon the propertyless” (Heald 1983:73), reflecting “the coercion inherent in market economies” (*ibid* :77). Heald (*ibid*: 76) notes tensions between “market freedoms and political freedoms” where the

latter is generally egalitarian but the former rests on inequality. In certain cases, it may be the state, not the market, which confers freedom: e.g. acting on moral principle, redistribution of resources, impartial and uniform treatment (*ibid*: 81- 82). Individuals can support state limitations on freedom, e.g. law and order. 'Freedom' is a more complex and controversial term than the New Right propose and is not a purely 'market related concept'. The 'freedom' conferred by a free market economy would not facilitate 'freedom' for all individuals to participate in the education system, this is precisely why Freidman advocates restrictions on markets in education.

The New Right focus on individualism requires greater consideration also. George & Wilding (1994:41) argue that although we are individuals, we are also interdependent "social beings". In Scottish education, the values and practice of collectivism and egalitarianism has been pervasive, arguably offering freedom not coercion to the previously uneducated (McPherson & Raab 1988). This is not to deny that individualism does not occur also, e.g. education is both a public and a private good. However, what is problematic is the New Right belief in the primacy of individualism, especially the public choice conception of rational and selfish behaviour. Truly rational behaviour is unachievable. Voters are constrained by time, resources and knowledge. Politicians are also, plus the mechanisms of public accountability. Not all bureaucrats desire or have the capacity for budget maximisation (Dunleavy 1985, Boyne 1987). The New Right is accused of "determinism" in their view of the nature and outcomes of the social and economic order (George & Wilding 1994:45).

However, New Right thought does offer scope for consideration of the role and purpose of government plus the functioning of economic and social orders. Economic considerations and the discourse of 'economy, efficiency and effectiveness' indicate the necessity to consider these issues in the welfare state as well as social issues (George & Wilding 1994). Markets and competition may generate some practical benefits to service provision and service users (George & Wilding 1994, Jordan 1993). It is plausible that "state responsibility" does not always have to equate with "state provision" and bureaucratic monopoly, rather an "enabling state" and individual/

consumer rights may be appropriate in some circumstances (George & Wilding 1994:43). The New Right has raised such issues onto the agenda.

Nevertheless, the dimensions and limitations of markets are rarely explored (Jordan 1993). The “New Right writings discuss the market in an abstract way” (George & Wilding 1994:42). There is not consideration of “the conditions in, and under, which they [markets] function” (*ibid*). The New Right assumes inequality of outcome but generally ‘equality’ in the ‘freedom’ to participate in the market system, ignoring differentials of “economic and political power” (*ibid*). The market system is not always the most efficient and effective system, e.g. transaction costs and distorted prices may create inefficiencies (Heald 1983). Individualised activity does not always generate the best collective outcome (King 1987) or a cohesive society (Mishra 1984). The reliance upon economic prescriptions fails to acknowledge the necessity of human and social values (George & Wilding 1994, Heald 1983). The extent to which markets are wholly applicable to the public sector is highly contentious (Hambleton & Hoggett 1984, Hoggett & Hambleton 1987, Stewart & Ranson 1988), particularly in education (Ball 1993, Bowe & Ball 1992, Bullock & Thomas 1997, Levacic 1995). Market inefficiencies and failures occur, as recognised in ‘externalities’, ‘neighbourhood effects’ and ‘public goods’.

The New Right contains the curious prescription that a free market should be promoted, but crucial services such as law and defence should be provided by the state. The belief that the market should be supreme and the state minimal is derived from a specific characterisation of government activity. The New Right are dismissive of the capacity for and benefits of politics and planning, preferring to advocate the ‘spontaneous order’ of the market as being both economically and socially beneficial:

The evidence simply does not support such a view... government policies can successfully...extend educational opportunity. Government is a proven instrument with a record of considerable success which challenges the New Right rejection of the possibilities of politics. (George & Wilding 1994:44).

The New Right’s negative critique of the welfare state is “unbalanced” (*ibid*). The market is not necessarily superior in ameliorating social problems. The welfare state

does not have to be inherently economically damaging. There is international and historical evidence that economic growth can occur within high public expenditure and taxation⁶ (King 1987, Mishra 1984). The New Right take an a- historical and narrow focus on government activity applying a negative and deterministic analyses, yet this is undermined by their assertion of the need for 'strong' government activity in crucial areas facilitating the market and preventing market failure. At the heart of the New Right there lies a tension between the 'free economy and the strong state' (Gamble 1988, Heald 1983). The differing strands of the New Right⁷ offer an overall body of thought which is characterised by 'contradictions and inconsistencies' (Brown & Sparks 1989) and ultimately "confused" (Jordan 1993:2). While this inconsistency can be asserted at the ideological level, it is problematic if applied. A free market requires no government intervention (or a minimal framework to allow the market to function freely). Whereas the provision of public goods demands continued government involvement. In practice, the New Right endorse the decentralisation and deregulation of a market, but accept also the continued centralisation and regulation of certain government services and functions.

In education, there is the 'strong state' of an increasingly centralised curriculum, alongside the 'free economy' of devolving school management, opting out and parental choice (Quicke 1988, Raab 1993b, Simon 1992). Such 'contradictions' can be due to the former being linked to 'neo- conservatism' and the latter 'neo- liberalism' (Simon 1992):

Neo- liberalism prioritizes freedom of choice, the individual, the market, minimal government and laissez- faire in contrast to neo- conservatism which prioritizes notions of social authoritarianism, the disciplined society, hierarchy and subordination, the nation and strong government. What they have in common is the general aim of securing a free economy, but as Gamble points out their priorities are different:

Neo- liberals put the objective of a free economy first; the strong state is a means of achieving this. The state is not valued in itself. Just the opposite is true for neo- conservatives.

For the latter, it is a question of creating a free economy so that the authority of the state can be secured and with it the authority of institutions throughout civil society, like the family and schools. The free economy will act as a discipline in economic institutions and the authority will be generalized throughout society. (Quicke 1988:8)

However, this does not fully resolve the 'paradox' (Busher & Saran 1993) and tension created by both centralisation and decentralisation. Debate continues as to whether the differing dimensions of the New Right and resultant policies are totally antagonistic, or whether they have the same ultimate aim - the legitimation of the state and the creation of a market economy. There is some merit in the belief that the promotion of the 'market' has been pervasive, albeit alongside state power also, however in principle and practice a 'pure' 'free market' is not prescribed nor will it be realised.

The 'New Public Management' and 'Management'

The 'New Public Management' (NPM) is a broad, loose label. Hood (1994:128) explains: "The term 'NPM' was coined to label a shift in public management styles". A 'shift' from 'old public administration' to 'new public management' has occurred (Hughes 1994, Lane 1995, Oliver & Drewry 1996, Parry 1992b, Pollitt 1990, Ranson & Stewart 1994). This is not simply a shift in semantics, but a change in the policy, purpose, structure, organisation, management and values of the public sector. The traditional reliance on professionalism, bureaucracy and public monopoly is to end. Public sector management, via NPM, is to become 'less distinct' from private management (Dunleavy & Hood 1994), the former learning from the latter resulting in a 'convergence' of practices (Farnham 1993) and 'merging' of sectors (Ranson & Stewart 1994). NPM is derived from a "marriage" of "new institutional economics" and "business-type 'managerialism'" (Hood 1991a:6):

This has generally involved two main strands: the introduction of managerial techniques from the private sector, and the development of market mechanisms within the public sector. (Walsh 1995:xii).

Such reforms relate to political values and ideals culminating in changes in policy, practice and discourse that amount to a 'revolution' (Common *et al* 1992). The shift

promotes management and markets, representing a 'radical change' (Hughes 1994) to the public sector and a 'profound change' (Walsh 1995) to the state and society.

As Hood (1991a:6) explains: "Many academic commentators associate the rise of the NPM with the political rise of the New Right". Both approaches utilise economic arguments for reform to promote the primacy of privatisation and markets, however they recognise that for certain services public provision may be more appropriate or less risky, hence the advocacy of private-style managerial reform and market mechanisms *within* the public sector. Farnham & Horton (1993) suggest that the NPM is a 'by-product' of the 'ascendancy' of the New Right. NPM reform 'accelerates' and is more extensive when promoted by Governments supporting New Right ideals (Pollitt 1990, Walsh 1995). Pollitt (1990:49) argues the New Right's promotion of 'NPM' style reform has become pervasive and has gained popular appeal:

Managerialism is the 'acceptable' face' of the new- right thinking concerning the state. It is an ingredient in the *pot pourri* which can attract support beyond the new right itself. For that wider constituency 'better management' sounds sober, neutral, as unopposable as virtue itself. Given the recent history of public- service expansion the productivity logic has a power of its own which stands independently of the political programme of the new right. Yet simultaneously, for new right believers, better management provides a label under which private- sector disciplines can be introduced to the public services, political control can be strengthened, budgets trimmed, professional autonomy reduced, public service unions weakened and a quasi- competitive framework erected to flush out the 'natural' inefficiencies of bureaucracy.

The political promotion of a right- wing agenda of markets and management has practical implications, alters discourse, becomes pervasive and popular.

Arguments for NPM can stand 'independently' of the New Right: "It cannot simply be asserted that the new public management is the result of the New Right gaining political power" (Walsh 1995:xxii, also Hood 1991a, Pollitt 1990). Antecedents of NPM can be traced prior to the New Right 'ascendancy' of the post- 1979 era⁸ (Dunleavy & Hood 1994, Hood 1991b, Hughes 1994, Oliver & Drewry 1996, Pollitt

1990, Walsh 1995). Concerns to reform the public sector became pronounced during the 'breakdown of consensus' in the mid- 1970s, this was not simply a right- wing preoccupation (Hughes 1994, Ranson & Stewart 1994). There was increasing concern about the relationship between the public sector and economic performance (Hughes 1994). Hood (1991a) argues that the key reason for the rise of NPM were due to changes in 'habitat' and 'interests'. Change was "pragmatic" (Walsh 1995:56), not purely political. There was a perceived 'fiscal crisis' (Ranson & Stewart 1994, Walsh 1995). The public sector was believed to have 'failed' (Walsh 1995) in supporting economic growth and social improvement: "the main reason is simply that the old model did not work any longer" (Hughes 1994:21). Demographic changes resulting in increasing dependency ratios required reform (Baldrock 1993). Furthermore, reform was possible and necessary due to technological development and the rise of 'informatization' (Hood 1994). Although political values influenced debate, practical arguments supported the need for reform.

Reform was required due to more fundamental changes than some of the above individual practical stimuli may highlight. Change was not limited to Britain, rather it was an international trend which crossed political spectrums and cultural barriers (Baldrock 1993). Structural changes in the economy, polity, society, work and organisation can be linked with the rise of NPM (Hughes 1994, Hood 1991b, Ranson & Stewart 1994, Walsh 1995). A globalisation of the economy added impetus to the need for reform and competitiveness (Hughes 1994, OECD 1992). Post- fordist techniques demanded reform of public sector practices (Hood 1991, Ranson & Stewart 1994, Walsh 1995). The public sector could not be immune to the nature of change in private sector organisation (Hughes 1994). Society itself was changing into a post- modernist concern with individualism and consumption resulting in the "erosion of public life" (Ranson & Stewart 1994:12). Both national and international , agency and structural changes combined to produce the climate for NPM. Hood (1991a) provides a classical exposition of the nature of NPM⁹ (see table 7.1).

TABLE 7.1 Doctrinal components of new public management

No.	Doctrine	Meaning	Typical justification
1	'Hands- on professional management' in the public sector	Active, visible, discretionary control of organizations from named persons at the top, 'free to manage'	Accountability requires clear assignment of responsibility for action, not diffusion of power
2	Explicit standards and measures of performance	Definition of goals, targets, indicators of success, preferably expressed in quantitative terms, especially for professional services (cf. Day and Klein 1987; Carter, 1989)	Accountability requires clear statement of goals; efficiency requires 'hard look' at objectives
3	Greater emphasis on output controls	Resource allocation and rewards linked to measured performance; breakup of centralized bureaucracy- wide personnel management	Need to stress <i>results</i> rather than <i>procedures</i>
4	Shift to <i>disaggregation</i> of units in the public sector	Break up of formerly 'monolithic' units, unbundling of U-form management systems into corporatized units around products, operating on decentralized 'one- line' budgets and dealing with one another on an 'arms- length' basis	Need to create 'manageable' units, separate <i>provision</i> and <i>production</i> interests, gain efficiency advantages of use of contract or franchise arrangements <i>inside</i> as well as outside the public sector
5	Shift to greater <i>competition</i> in public sector	Move to term contracts and public tendering procedures	<i>Rivalry</i> as the key to lower costs and better standards
6	<i>Stress on private- sector styles of management practice</i>	Move away from military- style 'public service ethic', greater flexibility in hiring and rewards; greater use of PR techniques	Need to use 'proven' private sector management tools in the public sector
7	Stress on greater <i>discipline</i> and <i>parimony</i> in resource use	Cutting direct costs, raising labour discipline, resisting union demands, limiting 'compliance costs' to business	Need to check resource demands of public sector and 'do more with less'

(Source: Hood 1991a:4- 5).

NPM facilitates the benefits of public sector provision and government involvement with the benefits also of private sector techniques and market mechanisms (Walsh 1995). The most radical reform of the public sector is full- scale privatisation, although government involvement remains for regulation (*ibid*). For the remaining public sector, NPM is not simply ideal 'doctrines' (Hood 1991a), but also practical reforms:

There are five major approaches that have been adopted by governments concerned to reform the management of the public sector from within...: introducing user charges for services; opening services up to competitive

tendering or putting work out on a contract basis; introducing internal markets; devolving financial control; and establishing parts of the organisation on an agency basis. (Walsh 1995:26).

The ideals and practices of NPM have influenced reform throughout the public sector.

i) Use of Charges

The importance of the price mechanism for information is central to market systems (Walsh 1995). Prices facilitate choice, encouraging the match of supply with demand and the creation of efficiency. However: "The use of charging... (in) public services has been relatively limited" (Walsh 1995:107). Charges are frequently deemed inappropriate for value reasons, e.g. the welfare state is universal, public goods exist. There are technical problems also, e.g. distinguishing unit costs and quantifying qualitative services. These 'cultural' and pragmatic factors have served to limit the use of charging in the UK.

Nevertheless, in education and local government, user charges may exist, e.g. for recreational facilities. However, these 'charges' are not a true cost price and tend to be 'marginal' to much public sector activity:

Even where charges are made... they are often symbolic or only weakly related to actual costs incurred. This is not an incidental feature of public services, alterable by some improvement in cost accountancy. Rather it is fundamental, for many public services *are* public precisely because there is little prospect of being able to finance them through direct consumer payments. This may be because the technical characteristics of the service make it non-excludable (like clear air) or because the service is specifically intended for those with insufficient income to meet market-related charges from their own pockets...Public-service managers, instead of focussing on stimulating the public's demand for their 'products', find themselves *de facto* searching for politically acceptable ways of limiting demand and rationing what they provide. (Pollitt 1990:123- 124).

If one moves beyond 'user charges' into mechanisms such as vouchers and especially internal charging, evidence of practice exists. Through policies such as DSM/ LMS

and CCT greater use of internal charging occurs. However, frequently these charges are based on 'average' costs. Education vouchers are aspirations of the New Right but have been strongly resisted (Chitty 1989, Seldon 1986). Even in the brief foray into Nursery Vouchers in Scotland, they remain controversial, are considered as rejecting the values of the education system such as equity, encounter technical difficulties and transaction costs, and ultimately are significantly different from direct 'user charges' (Clark 1997a). Internal charging is now established in education and local government systems, some use of 'user charges' occurs also, while vouchers are more limited and in the case of education retain an 'experimental' nature.

Walsh (1995) argued it is surprising that greater use of charging has not been made. However, he argues that to do so both a more fundamental consideration of the associated values and implications, plus technical and structural reform to facilitate the functioning of charges are required. Internal charges have been developed and hold future potential:

The development of internal charging and internal markets and of the devolution of budgetary control are stages on the way to the operation of real, price-based markets, though that end-point may never actually be reached. (*Ibid*:108).

This is a moot point. DSM is an embodiment of the above policies and practices.

ii) Contracts

Some writers (Oliver & Drewry 1996, Walsh 1995) argue the movement to 'contract', along with development of 'competition' and notions of 'customers' are the defining features of the current reform of the public sector. Walsh (1995:xvii- xviii) explains:

The simplest form of the use of contract is the buying in of services from private providers. The public organisation may be allowed to compete with potential private providers in a market-testing programme or work may simply be externalised. Contract has become, along with the concept of customer, a fundamental metaphor for the changes that are being made in the public service. It is likely to be used to characterise relationships within the

organisation as those with private providers. Authority relations are being redefined as contracts.

Contracts can be with 'external' agencies or 'internal' public providers.

Walsh (1995: 110) defines the nature of contracts:

Contracts involve a move from a hierarchical to a market- based approach to the organisation of public services, in which the roles of principal and agent are clearly separated and property rights more explicit. The public sector, as client, commissioner or purchaser, contracts with those who actually provide the service, the providers or contractors. The responsibility of the purchaser is to define what is wanted, to let the contract, and to monitor performance; the provider is responsible for the actual production and delivery of the service.

Contracts create new methods of public provision. They create the need also for the development of performance measurement. This affects the service, organisation and the nature of the employment 'contract'. Hence:

The public service is becoming a 'nexus of contracts', rather than a bureaucratic hierarchy. (*Ibid*: xviii).

Contracts for public provision can take a variety of forms, e.g. deregulation, contracting out, market testing or compulsory competitive tendering (CCT) (Walsh 1995). CCT has had the greatest impact on local government services. While contracts have been used previously for supplying services to the public sector, the development of CCT from the 1980s extended this policy into almost all potential areas of provision:

The major expansion of contracting and competitive tendering followed the Local Government Act 1988, which required local authorities to subject a range of manual services to competitive tender. If the local authority won the right to provide the services then it had to do so on a quasi- contractual basis, operating an internal trading account, which could not be cross- subsidised, and had to meet stated targets that were set by central government. The services that were initially covered by the act were refuse collection, street cleaning, building cleaning, catering, vehicle maintenance, ground maintenance and leisure

management. Competition has been extended to a range of other local authority services, including professional services, such as engineering, law, finance, personnel, housing management and computer services. (*Ibid*: 120).

These developments affect local government services for the education system. With the shift to DSM/ LMS and opting out, schools have the capacity also to enter into their own contractual relationships (Walsh 1995). Under DSM, schools can choose whether to purchase certain services from the EA or from alternative suppliers. This capacity is extended under GMS, whereby the school must operate on a contractual basis with suppliers. 'Contractualization' is developing, but at early stages in Scotland.

There is scope for greater efficiency with CCT. Cost savings have been reported (Domberger *et al* 1986, National Association of Health Authorities 1989), as have improvements in managerial practices, to a more customer responsive and business-style approach (Ascher 1987, Carnaghan & Bracewell-Milnes 1993, Frederick 1994, Jones 1994, Kay *et al* 1986,, Shaw *et al* 1993). Large proportions of public provision remain publicly provided, but these providers are now operating in a more economical and efficient manner (Parry 1992b)¹⁰. This shift to contracts "is allied with performance measurement" (Walsh 1995:xviii), creating managerial improvement and efficiency.

The initial development of performance measurement was the creation of management information (MINIS) within the central civil service in 1980 (Gray & Jenkins 1993, Parry 1992, Pollitt 1990). Subsequently, management information and performance measurement has been extended throughout the public sector (Parry 1992b, Walsh 1995). A fundamental problem with performance measurement is that a variety of dimensions could be measured, therefore political choice is exercised as to what criteria 'count' (Common *et al* 1992, Oliver & Drewry 1996). This is especially problematic in education where exam league tables are the dominant performance measurement. These have been criticised for being crude indicators, which require improvement and alternative measures to facilitate a qualitative and 'value-added' dimension (Chitty 1989, Murphy 1992, Rao 1990, Simon 1988). Performance measurement may measure the 'economy' achieved by the service provider and the

'efficiency' of management, but in order to judge the 'effectiveness' of the service it must take account of the needs and criteria of each service. The need to develop adequate performance measures is compounded by the fact that they affect the 'employment contract'. Increasingly, performance-related pay is being introduced (Common *et al* 1992, Parry 1992b). As a direct result of CCT, a worsening of the employment contract has occurred, involving redundancies, wage cuts, loss of rights and benefits, short-term contracts and part-time work (Ascher 1987, Caldwell 1988, Common *et al* 1992, National Association of Health Authorities 1989). Therefore, performance measurement requires careful consideration.

In financial terms, the creation and maintenance of CCT can be costly. There are administrative costs in setting up CCT, plus the development and renewing of contracts. The monitoring and inspection of contracts and provision can be costly also, placing financial and skill demands on the public sector (Hughes 1994). There may be costs in terms of local flexibility (Ascher 1987, Carnaghan & Bracewell-Milnes 1993). Once a contract has been accepted, it cannot be varied within the short-term. There can be problems when private providers win contracts. There is the political issue about "the replacement of the public service ethos with private sector profit motive" (Ascher 1987:248). A related issue is the ethical question of the changes in public accountability with contractual relationships and private providers (Hughes 1994). There is the possibility that without the 'public service ethos', corruption will become more prevalent (*ibid*). Private activity may fail to provide some of the social benefits and achieve profits also. Contractual relationships can bring benefits, especially in terms of economic savings and managerial efficiency, but problems exist with private provision, contracts and competition also. In certain cases private provision and competition may be inappropriate, e.g. to ensure confidentiality, equity, standards and for non-quantifiable services (Hughes 1994). Hughes (1994) argues the use of mechanisms such as CCT should be optional and subject to detailed consideration. Furthermore:

There are limitations of how far the process can go; after all, 'services can be contracted out but governance cannot'. (*ibid*: 266).

The issue is whether contracting and competition are appropriate and to what extent.

iii) Internal Markets

The development of charging and contracts is furthered by 'internal markets':

Purchaser and provider are separated, and relate to each other through quasi-contracts, with prices and charges operating to ensure the match of supply and demand. Internal purchasers are increasingly free to buy where they want... which puts downward pressure on service costs and creates incentives to increase productivity and efficiency. Purchasers, acting as surrogates for ultimate users, are forced to be more explicit about rationing decisions that they make. (Walsh 1995: xviii).

There is an assumption that a distinction can be made between 'core' activities which are the domain of public sector activity, and the 'ancillary' service delivery function which can be contracted out.

The 'internal market' has been applied most fully in the NHS (Butler 1993, Gray 1993, Griggs 1990, Ham 1989, Hughes 1993,1994, Kemp 1990, Moon & Kendall 1993, National Association of Health Authorities 1989, Oliver & Drewry 1996, Pollitt 1990)¹¹. Managerial changes have occurred (Moon & Kendall 1993). However, the costs of creating the internal market and bureaucracy of doing so have been criticised (Gray 1993). Fundamentally, it is not a pure market and consumer choice has not been directly enhanced. The internal market is perceived as a full- scale 'experiment' the consequences of which cannot be anticipated (Pollitt 1990). As in education, tensions between 'market' and 'management' exist, with the potential emergence of not simply market forces, but hierarchy and networks also (Bowe & Ball 1992, Levacic 1995).

In local government, the development of an 'internal market' is linked mainly to CCT (Walsh 1995). The pressures of LMS/DSM requiring "internal trading of services" has stimulated development also (*ibid*: 154). Walsh outlines some of the implications:

greater internal management costs, in preparing specifications, monitoring services, and operating systems of invoicing and payment. On the contractor side, there are costs in maintaining records of the way in which staff spend their time, so that it can be appropriately charged. Generally, there are increased costs of information and management accounting systems. The

development of internal markets is seen as ensuring better knowledge of costs and quality, but involves its own cost and bureaucracy... greater formality in relationships, particularly in the resolution of differences, though there is strong emphasis on the need for informality and trust. (*Ibid*:156).

Walsh (*ibid*:154) suggests the purchaser/ provider split is “more complex” in local government than the NHS. Local government deals with a range of different services and “a large number of inter- linked clients and contractors all trading with one another” (*ibid*). The creation of clear and precise contract specification may be problematic, while appropriate quality assurance is contentious (*ibid*:159- 160). Local government budgeting and information procedures are not traditionally equipped for the needs of the internal market .This is considerable change, yet may not realise all the conditions necessary for the successful operation of an ‘internal market’: i.e. incentives for efficient decision- making; management training; a culture of commerce; cost information; information on efficiency improvements; lack of interest conflict (*ibid*:162- 163). Furthermore, there is:

the need for a mixture of market and hierarchical principles in order to ensure that the internal network of purchasers and providers can operate effectively. Most authorities have found that a clear organisational framework is needed to ensure that the internal market can operate. (*Ibid*:157).

The internal market is not a ‘pure’ market, but a complex set of inter- relationships.

Linked to the creation of the internal market in local government have been two outcomes. Firstly, “the creation of service level agreements, charging procedures and some user choice” (*ibid*:154). Secondly, the devolution of budgets to enable purchasing of support services (*ibid*: 155). The Audit Commission (1988:3) envisaged LMS as the creation of a purchaser / provider split between school and EA. DSM and LMS are integral to the notion of an ‘internal market’ in education (Levacic 1992,1995, Walsh 1995).

iv) Devolving Financial Control

The separation of purchaser and provider extends to separate political from operational:

Service providers can be established as independent units, having control of their own budgets, and, preferably, acting in competition with one another. Politicians can set goals and can effectively monitor the performance of the bureaucrats by establishing systems for determining whether targets are being met, and perhaps, paying by results. Public organisations are separating the political and managerial levels through the creation of devolved budgets, with strong levels of independent control at the local operational level. (Walsh 1995:164).

In practice, separating 'political' from 'operational' in education is problematic.

The principle of managerial reform and financial devolution was first implemented in the civil service. Following the Rayner scrutinies started in 1979 and MINIS in 1980, the Financial Management Initiative (FMI) was launched in May 1982 (Common *et al* 1992, Gray & Jenkins 1993, Horton 1993, Oliver & Drewry 1996, Parry 1992b, Pollitt, 1990, Walsh 1995)¹². The FMI has been criticised as 'narrow' in focus with 'limited' implications, concerned more with 'control' and 'finance' rather than a holistic managerial and organisational reform (Pollitt 1990, Walsh 1995). Nevertheless, it established the practices and principles of cost centres, a separation of strategic and operational management, resource management, delegated management, management accounting systems, performance indicators and information systems. These practices were extended into the NHS, which became subject to Rayner scrutinies in 1982, plus its own review leading to the Griffiths Report in 1983 (Flynn 1990, Griggs 1990, Moon & Kendall 1993, Pollitt 1990, Pollitt *et al* 1991, Ranson & Stewart 1994, Walsh 1995). The Griffiths Report emphasised the values of business and general management. A subsequent development was the devolution of finance through the Resource Management Initiative introduced in 1986. The difficulties encountered with RMI arose from practical problems of establishing "effective management information" (Walsh 1995:172) and overcoming the culture of 'professional autonomy'.

The above policies and problems have implications for the devolution of financial management in education. Some view LMS/ DSM as the extension of FMI into

education (McAlister & Connolloy 1990, Ranson & Thomas 1989). Although Walsh (1995:172) categorises LMS along with FMI and RMI, he views the former as significantly different and more “radical”:

The purpose of formula funding... is to limit the discretion of the local education authority, and the local management of schools therefore differs from the Financial Management Initiative, which made no changes to the way that activities were funded. The local management of schools was not orientated to control so much as creating a changed pattern of incentives for head teachers and governing bodies through giving them stronger property rights over their resources. The difference of the local management of schools from most other initiatives in devolved budgeting was in creating a genuine pattern of bottom-up control. It was not so much changing the relationship between principal and agent as creating new principals and agents. (*Ibid*:173- 174).

Unlike FMI and RMI, LMS is not as concerned with hierarchy but rather “relationships within the local education system now have the form more of a network” (*ibid*:177). While there is support for the notion that LMS creates ‘networks’ and devolves some powers, the issue of control is contentious with some critics perceiving increased central control (Ball 1993, Bowe & Ball 1992, Bullock & Thomas 1997, Busher & Saran 1993, Chitty 1989, Levacic 1995, Raab 1994a, Simon 1992). There would be greater agreement that LMS/DSM differs from RMI and FMI as it is concerned with income generation as well as “expenditure control” (Walsh 1995:174) and the flexibility of carry - forward. There is broad agreement also about the problems associated with LMS and DSM as mechanisms of financial devolution (see Chapter 6). In NPM prescriptions, the education system is according in principle and policy, but differing in practical details.

In all cases of financial devolution cited, there are limits to autonomy at the local level. Central control, e.g. through setting overall budgets, determining the rules of devolution, performance measuring and inspection remains. This may alter the management process:

...decentralisation alone is not likely to be powerful enough to overcome the inherent central control of organisations, and , where central control persists,

managers will spend a greater part of their time trying to influence those with control than would be the case in a more devolved context. (Walsh 1995: 179). 'Decentralisation' is a broad term, one must consider the proposed purpose, nature, management and organisational structuring of the precise form of 'devolution' before any assessment of its impact (Common *et al* 1992).

v) Agencies

The "logical development" is the creation of quasi- independent 'agencies' (Walsh 1995:180). Hence, the 'fulfilment' of FMI, RMI and LMS/DSM is the creation of executive agencies, trust status hospitals and grant- maintained schools (Walsh 1995). Walsh (*ibid*: xviii) outlines the general nature of these developments:

Large public service organisations, organised along bureaucratic lines, are broken down into smaller independent units, with autonomy to operate relatively freely. Schools, colleges and hospitals have been allowed independence from overseeing authorities. Autonomy has been increased within organisations through the creation of internal agencies operating at 'arm's length'. These independent, or internally autonomous agencies operate according to quasi- market principles, relating to each other through contracting and the purchase of services. They are monitored and controlled through performance measurement and targets. The public service is becoming a more or less integrated network of organisations that relate through contract and price rather than authority.

These changes break with traditional hierarchy.

Following the Ibbs Report, the Next Steps initiative was launched in 1988 leading to the creation of executive agencies throughout the civil service (Common *et al* 1992, Gray & Jenkins 1993, Greenwood & Wilson 1989, Oliver & Drewry 1996, Parry 1992, Pollitt 1990, Walsh 1995)¹³. Change has not been as profound or speedy as may have been anticipated. There has been an unwillingness to relinquish central control (Walsh 1995). Where previous public employees have remained in the 'new' agencies, there is some unwillingness to alter and challenge 'traditional' methods (Common *et al* 1992,

Walsh 1995). 'Agency' status can be constrained both by external pressures, e.g. continuing central control, and internal reluctance to change.

Walsh (1995:165) suggests schools have greater "power" and "freedom" than executive agencies. Nevertheless, this does not imply that the problems and resistance noted are not also present in education. Walsh (1995:192) offers the perplexing conclusion that:

The change to schools, which has certainly been as radical as any other, took place without any significant change in the structure of the education service.

This is an empirical question, which Walsh has not adequately explored. It appears that the 'radical' managerial and organisational structure changes, which one would associate with NPM, have not been prevalent in practice. Indeed, the structural changes that have occurred, through increased central control and the creation of the Funding Agency for Schools may thwart radical changes at the local level: "the establishment of a new hierarchy illustrates the difficulty of establishing market processes" (*ibid*: 184). The market does not operate freely, networks have not emerged to the potential suggested by Walsh and hierarchy persists. Agencies do not equate with autonomy.

Change is occurring but frequently in unpredictable and 'incomplete' ways. The new relationships and responsibilities make public accountability complex and sometimes tenuous (Hughes 1994, Oliver & Drewry 1996, Walsh 1995). The shift to competition, contracts and managerialism creates differences and division both internal to the public sector and in relation to external bodies. There are "constitutional tensions arising out of the New Public Management Revolution" (Oliver & Drewry 1996: 47- 48). There are 'tensions' surrounding 'accountability', 'political' and 'managerial' issues and interests.

Although the extent of change has varied and may not yet be fully realised, the NPM has influenced and affected the management and organisation of the public sector. All of the mechanisms outlined above have influenced local government and education systems. DSM is an example of substantial financial devolution, while the reorganised

Scottish local government is affected by CCT and the creation of internal markets resulting in an 'enabling' model. All five policy changes are not mutually exclusive, but rather mutually reinforcing. A separation of 'purchasers' and 'providers' necessitates changed managerial practices and organisational structures on both sides (Flynn 1990, Ranson & Stewart 1989, Shaw *et al* 1993, Walsh 1995). Strategic and operational skills need to be developed (Hughes 1994, Moon & Kendall 1993). Increased differentiation and diversity, requires a recognition of networks and management responses to cope with this and co- ordinate accordingly (Alexander 1988, Walsh 1995). NPM suggests a changed culture (Farnham & Horton 1993). It requires technological changes to cope with the demands of management information, monitoring, performance measuring and financial management (Walsh 1995). These changes are occurring to differing degrees and with varying success throughout the public sector (Hughes 1994).

Critique of NPM

The 'ideological basis' of NPM contains an economic and a managerial dimension. The economic basis is similar to the New Right, drawing on public choice analysis and a belief in markets. However, the public choice depiction of bureaucrats is flawed and 'markets' and 'competition' is neither universally applicable nor appropriate in the public sector (Common *et al* 1992, George & Wilding 1994, Hughes 1994, Walsh 1995). The second strand is 'managerialism' derived from private sector models. Pollitt (1990:171) argues the management advocated is neo- Taylorist resulting in "detailed control of measurable activity" and "de- control of the employment relationship". Evidence of the former lies in the NPM's advocacy of targets, monitoring, and performance measurement. However, Hughes (1994) suggests that previous bureaucratic public administration practices were more Taylorite than the local control espoused by the NPM. Both are agreed however that NPM results in an erosion of the employment relationship, undermining human relations approaches (Hughes 1994, Pollitt 1990). Certain values are promoted, particularly economy and efficiency, while others are ignored, such as justice, equity and citizenship (Pollitt 1990, Ranson & Stewart 1994). NPM has been critiqued on grounds of coherence, realism and values (Pollitt 1990).

The fundamental principle of NPM is that the public sector can be reformed through generic private sector management models. This is the source of greatest criticism also. There is a long-standing debate as to whether the public and private sectors are inherently different (Alban-Metcalf 1989, Drucker 1974, Dunsire 1982, Farnham & Horton 1993, Flynn 1990, Hughes 1994, Kean 1994, Keeling 1972, Kooiman & Eliassen 1987, Mair & Moore 1993, Metcalf & Richards 1987, Millett 1961, Murray 1975, Parry 1992b, Perry & Kraemar 1983, Perry & Rainey 1988, Pollitt 1990, Pollitt & Harrison 1992, Prior 1993, Self 1965, Smith Ring & Perry 1985, Stewart 1989, Stewart & Ranson 1988, Ranson & Stewart 1994, Walsh 1995). Evidence of similarities and difference can be discerned. However, most evidence suggests the two sectors are sufficiently different as to be considered distinctive. Many of the values underpinning the public sector are argued to be extremely different from the private sector's economic values, e.g. a concept of need, justice, equality, society, citizenship, democracy and confidentiality (Pollitt 1990, Ranson & Stewart 1994, Stewart 1989). These values create a distinctive public service ethos influencing practice. The public sector is concerned with collective values offering judgement and evaluation of conflicting values (Ranson & Stewart 1994), giving public management a political character (Walsh 1995). In its structures and processes, the public sector is inherently political, in a way that the private sector is not (Greenwood & Wilson 1989, Parry 1992b, Prior 1993, Stewart 1989). The public sector is statutorily defined operating within rules and agendas established primarily by politicians (Hughes 1994, Parry 1992b, Pollitt 1990). The nature of public expenditure and taxation distinguish the public sector (Hughes 1994). The public sector is 'political' in its relationship with its recipients, public 'voice' affects public management (Ranson & Stewart 1994). This places the public sector in a unique system of accountability (Hughes 1994, Parry 1992b, Pollitt 1990, Stewart 1989). In the public sector, a simple producer/ consumer dichotomy is inappropriate, 'customers' must be recognised as 'citizens' with rights (Hughes 1994, Pollitt 1990, Ranson & Stewart 1994, Walsh 1995). Unlike 'consumer choice' in the private sector, some public services are compulsory and therefore imply a level of 'coercion' (Hughes 1994). This signifies substantial differences in the 'context' of public sector compared to the private sector.

There are differences within the workings of the public sector also. The traditional nature of employment is based on security and tenure (Parry 1992b, Pollitt 1990). Goals are often less clear cut creating inherent problems in measuring performance (Ranson & Stewart 1994). Generally, the public sector is 'non-profit-making' (*ibid*) and therefore does not have a 'bottom-line' criteria for measuring 'output' (Hughes 1994). The sheer scale of the public sector organisation and its potential provision makes management a complex task (*ibid*). Hence, there are specific characteristics associated with the public sector which affect its management (Farnham & Horton 1993).

The above differences are general presenting a unified and simplified view of public and private sectors. In reality: "Between the ideal types of private and public organisation are a number of hybrid forms" (Ranson & Stewart 1994:26). As a consequence of NPM, the differences between the two sectors have 'blurred' (*ibid*). Nevertheless:

although the differences between public and private organisations may have diminished, important distinctions remain and continue to require explanatory and normative analysis. (*Ibid*).

NPM is criticised for not recognising these 'important distinctions' and deriving a consequently appropriate approach to public management. Stewart (1989:12- 13) warns of the "danger" inherent in NPM's implementing of private management "purposes, conditions and tasks" on to the distinctive "public domain": "that is bad management, for it denies the rationale of the organization". While the public sector may be able to learn from private and general management techniques, their imposition should be avoided (Hughes 1994, Kean 1994, Prior 1993). The traditional public sector requires reform to cope with modern needs, but alternative methods should be developed rather than the narrow, inappropriate and inadequate model of NPM (Dunleavy & Hood 1994, Hood 1991a, Hughes 1994, Lane 1993, Pollitt 1990, Ranson & Stewart 1994, Stewart 1989).

NPM is criticised for not making the public nature of public management the defining feature. Critics advocate the need for a quintessentially public management (Ranson &

Stewart 1994). However, the nature of 'public' sector requires greater exposition (Dunleavy & Hood 1994). Mair & Moore (1993) are critical of analyses of public management which stress differences in context only. Rather they propose the need to consider the content of public management, defining 'public' as an inherent and value-based character of the sector rather than simply a contextual or technical argument. Critics of the New Right and NPM reject the 'privatisation' of the public sector. However, there needs to be clearer consideration of which services are exclusively private, exclusively public or potentially 'mixed'. The notion of public goods is not definitive, as it requires both technical and value judgements (Mair & Moore 1993). The influence of NPM and New Right have challenged and altered the conceptualisation of 'public' (Prior 1993). Walsh (1995:254) advocates: "The need for a wider concept of the nature of the public realm", requiring breadth and the capacity for differentiation:

It is arguable that the fundamental change that has occurred in the public sector is not the replacement of one broadly uniform set of arrangements (in which ownership, financing and operational responsibility rested with the state) with another uniform set, but the fracturing of the public sector into a plethora of different sets of arrangements with few common features. It is then questionable whether the term 'public sector' is any longer useful as a generic analytical concept. (Prior 1993:459).

NPM creates differentiation in organisational structure and is being realised differently in various settings, the result may be that the 'public sector' is internally diverse. There is a need for conceptual and empirical exploration of the new public management(s).

NPM is flawed not only for promoting private management, but also generic management, which fails to capture the distinctiveness of the public sector and diversity within. 'Universalism' is inherently unrealistic and problematic, this is perhaps more so in the complex public sector (Hood 1991a, Oliver & Drewry 1996, Parry 1992b). The public sector is characterised by a variety of purpose and services; in addition, variations in application of NPM exist (Dunleavy & Hood 1994, Walsh 1995). It is 'ironic' that reforms to ameliorate the 'unresponsiveness' and 'inflexibility' of the public sector have retained a belief in universal principles:

The irony is that the challenge provided by the New Right to a uniform model of public sector management that assumed direct control and provision within organisations structured by hierarchical control has substituted a new simplistic uniformity of the market. There are distinctive purposes and tasks in the public domain which cannot be fulfilled by the mechanisms of the market... There is a need for a more appropriate vision of the public domain and a more discriminating theory of its management. (Ranson & Stewart 1994:23).

Organisation theory suggests the need to tailor management to the needs, purposes, conditions, environment and tasks of each organisation or service (*ibid*). A detailed comparison within the public sector is an empirical project out with the scope of the present research. Nevertheless, within over-arching trends, such as NPM, differences are emerging and should become central in conception and analyses of the public sector.

NPM has influenced public sector management. Benefits in terms of economy and efficiency have been discerned. Nevertheless, difficulties persist in the implementation of NPM techniques, creation of specifications, contractual relations, and the purchaser/provider split (Hughes 1994, Walsh 1995). There are concerns that the NPM may be rejecting and therefore losing some of the positive elements of the old public model, e.g. ethical standards, professionalism, impartiality and absence of corruption (Hughes 1994). This may influence staff morale (Hughes 1994, Pollitt 1990). Tensions between individual and collective rights remain unresolved (Walsh 1995). A climate of litigation may emerge (Dunleavy & Hood 1994). In practice as well as concept, problems with NPM can be discerned.

Ultimately, the NPM has been condemned as “all hype and no substance” :

the advent of new managerialism has changed little, apart from the language in which senior public ‘managers’ speak in public. (Hood 1991a:9).

Public sector practitioners have adopted private management discourse (Common *et al* 1992, Hughes 1994, Gregory 1990, Pollitt 1990, Ranson & Stewart 1994, Walsh 1995). However, critics claim that this “impact at the level of rhetoric and vocabulary”

(Pollitt 1990:84) is minimal, limited, essentially superficial (Parry 1992b) and does not demonstrate the full understanding of those adopting the language (Hughes 1994).

Nevertheless, a shift in language can be profound and pervasive indicating interests promoted, values espoused and influencing practice (Common *et al* 1992, Hood 1994, Hughes 1994, Pollitt 1990, Ranson & Stewart 1994, Walsh 1995). Hughes (1994:4) argues that the shift from *administration* to *management* “means a major change in theory and function”. The discourse of NPM is linked to the culture and interests being promoted (Hood 1994), this influences pervasive ideology and practical behaviour (Pollitt 1990). Hence, the shift in language accomplished by NPM is considered to be a vital and important element in the transformation of the public sector into private management techniques and values (Common *et al* 1992, Walsh 1995). The NPM rejects conceptions such as traditional public administration, impinging upon what is deemed acceptable behaviour. Ranson & Stewart (1994:4) explain:

The language appropriate to one kind of organisation has now become the currency for all... Organisational models assume the values of the private even when their focus is the public. This has meant that many activities of public bodies are implicitly defined as outside the concern of management: protest, politics, public debate, inter- authority co-operation, and civil rights. The public domain has been simplified.

A shift in ‘rhetoric’ is not superficial but substantive and profound:

By accepting a shallower and narrower view of management, public sector managers are subliminally agreeing with a view of management which precludes them from adhering to previously cherished values. (Common *et al* 1992:134).

The literature on ‘organisational culture’ indicates the importance of language and symbols for generating profound and enduring organisational change (Anthony 1994, Deal & Kennedy 1982, Frost *et al* 1985, Morgan 1986).

NPM is not without limitations and problems. In particular, it seeks to apply an universal model, derived primarily from the private sector, to the public sector, which is distinctive from the private sector and internally differentiated. Nevertheless, the

NPM has been pervasive in promoting its ideals, altering discourse and promoting practical reforms.

The Discourse of Economy, Efficiency and Effectiveness

The New Right has been described as an attempt to gain 'hegemony' (Green 1987), while the NPM can be perceived also as an exercise in the domination of ideas and practices. Although there are differences in detail between the two perspectives, both promote a belief in 'privatism' achieved through market mechanisms and management reform. Change is to be in ideas, values, and practice. In such a process, language is vital:

Rhetoric was necessary to bring about acceptance of new ideas... The introduction of market mechanisms for the management of the public service can be seen as a process of policy diffusion and gradual institutionalisation, rather than a management revolution. It is necessary to make changes at the level of language before changing organisational processes and practices. (Walsh 1995:80).

Change is not straight- forward. It is messy and frequently unpredictable. The New Right and NPM may have influenced public policy, but were mediated by the Government's own policies and preferences. Those affected by change have the capacity also to resist and re- interpret policies. There are problems in assuming that the language employed will replicate behaviour and that behaviour reveals beliefs. Nevertheless, if a strong discourse is established and promoted, the general nature of change espoused is more likely to become popularised, pervasive and intrinsic.

What Pollitt (1990:59) characterised as "the virtuous three Es": economy, efficiency and effectiveness" have been promoted for reform throughout the public sector and government (Hughes 1994, Parry 1992b, Rhodes 1991). Economy is defined as "ensuring that actual inputs do not exceed planned inputs" (Gunn 1988:21), generally achieved through the "minimization of programme inputs" (Pollitt 1990:59). Efficiency concerns the "ratio between inputs and outputs" (*ibid*), this can be altered by "increasing output whilst holding input constant or by holding output constant whilst reducing inputs" (McAlister & Connolly 1990:36). Effectiveness relates to "the

degree to which programme *outcomes* match the original programme *objectives*' (Pollitt 1990:59). The adoption and promotion of a particular version of the 'three Es' rests on political judgement, relying primarily on economic criteria.

George & Wilding (1994:43) argue that there are beneficial developments:

the forcing on to the agenda of issues of economy, efficiency and effectiveness and the asking of sharp questions about aims and outcomes and costs. For thirty years, these key questions were seldom asked with the proper force and urgency.

The change in debate and agenda is novel to the public sector but has become a pervasive discourse. Walsh (1995: xv) explains:

The language of 'enabling' (Ridley, 1988) has now become established within the public sector, so that, even if one wishes to argue against the new orthodoxy, one must start from its ideological presuppositions. The failure of traditional approaches is taken as axiomatic, even if on limited evidence.

The extent to which this 'new' approach is welcome and beneficial is contentious.

The discourse of 'three Es' advocates changes in policy, practice and culture (Parry 1992b). The introduction of NPM techniques and market forces is proposed:

The re-examination of methods of working will lead to improved technical efficiency in the public service, through the elimination of waste and restrictive practices, and through the introduction of modern methods. The introduction of user choice will ensure that the public is able to get what they want, and that the providers take note of their wishes, improving allocative efficiency. The development of such processes as competitive tendering reduces the power of the producers and ensures that X-efficiency is increased. The incentive to minimise costs ensures that the public service is organised along the most efficient lines, especially where managers are given more explicit property rights, for example through the elimination of annuality or the introduction of performance pay. (Walsh 1995:22).

It is posited the public sector is deficient in terms of the 'three Es' criteria, whereas markets can create efficiency, economy and consequently effectiveness (Farnham &

Horton 1993, George & Wilding 1994, Lane 1995, Pollitt 1990, Ranson & Stewart 1994 Taylor- Gooby & Lawson 1993, Walsh 1995). However, the discourse of 'economy, efficiency and effectiveness' is neither coherent nor equally weighted (Pollitt 1990). A narrow focus on economy and efficiency has dominated to the detriment of consideration of effectiveness (Gunn 1988, Hughes 1994, Pollitt 1990). The three criteria have been conflated into a notion of 'cost effectiveness' and judged as 'efficient' accordingly (Bullock & Thomas 1997). An economic criteria of 'efficiency' has come to dominate, hence a discourse of 'efficiency'.

The pursuit of 'efficiency' is not straight- forward. There is limited evidence that market forces in the public sector have resulted in increased efficiency (Walsh 1995). The concept of 'efficiency' is difficult to measure, especially in the public sector (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Lane 1995, Levacic 1995, Ranson & Stewart 1994, Walsh 1995). It is possible that 'efficiency' within the public sector is a different criteria from private models (Ranson & Stewart 1994). Pure technical 'efficiency' may be impeded by the demands of want satisfaction (Pollitt 1990). 'Efficiency' gains have been internal to public services rather than in relation to external users (Walsh 1995). The sources of many of these 'efficiency' gains have been the downgrading of employment conditions and contracts (*ibid*). The discourse of the 'three Es' omits to recognise that there are limits to the efficiency gains achievable within the public sector and therefore complete transformation may be almost impossible (Pollitt 1990). The reformed public sector is not a pure market, therefore full market efficiency is unattainable (Walsh 1995). Furthermore, even within a free market system, economy, efficiency and effectiveness cannot be assured, e.g. transaction costs are incurred, market failures and inefficiencies occur (Heald 1983, Walsh 1995). The discourse of 'three Es' is a limited and simplistic interpretation of public policy which promotes economy as desirable and linked to efficiency which equates with markets, which are effective if perfectly implemented. In reality, inconsistencies, incoherence and reinterpretations arise.

Discourses are interesting for the values and language that they promote, and the ones that they reject and exclude (Ball 1990, Foucault 1981, Howarth 1995). The promotion of economic and business language ignores the needs and nature of the public sector:

The danger is that the hard- edged clarity of the market may drive out the more ambiguous and diffuse language of politics, which necessarily involves conflicting values, and multi- valued choice. (Walsh 1995:253)

Stewart (1989:14) argues that public, political and collective values must underpin the public sector:

equity, justice, citizenship, democracy are all involved in the provision of public service. Management cannot merely be concerned with the three Es- economy, efficiency and effectiveness. It must be concerned with the fourth E of equality.

Public sector values are ignored by the 'three Es' (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Hughes 1994, Levacic 1995, Pollitt 1990, Ranson & Stewart 1994, Stewart 1989, Walsh 1995).

The discourse of economy, efficiency and effectiveness has been pervasive in education reform (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Lee 1990, Levacic 1995, McAlister & Connolly 1990, Meredith 1990). Economic criteria have been applied (Meredith 1990), with efficiency being utmost, defined primarily in terms of 'cheapness' and 'cost-effectiveness' (Bullock & Thomas 1997). Although efficiency is allied with effectiveness, there may be conflict between the requirements of both and difficulties in determining their nature in education (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Levacic 1995). There is limited evidence of efficiency gains (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Levacic 1995). Devolving school management may generate increased financial and managerial efficiency (Bullock & Thomas 1997, DfE 1992b, Levacic 1995). Improved 'efficiency' in terms of encouraging and widening participation is mixed (Bowe & Ball 1992, Bullock & Thomas 1997, Levacic 1995). While evidence of improved effectiveness in terms of teaching and learning is marginal and inconclusive (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Levacic 1995, Wilson *et al* 1995).

The promotion of economy, efficiency and effectiveness is value based containing "a strong moral force" (Bullock & Thomas 1997:45). The 'Scottish myth' had a moral dimension suggesting if the education system was open, equitable and meritocratic, individual failure was due to the individual not the system (McPherson & Raab 1988). The 'efficiency' discourse also employs a moral element to shift attribution in

responsibility. By suggesting that structures can be made as efficient as possible, failure or inefficiency is due to individual actors or the combination of mis- actions or inaction. There is a shift in the attribution of blame from the politically determined educational structure, to the individual agents located within. In addition, the very structure is called into question. If decentralised management is the most efficient, what logic is there in retaining a middle- tier, contingently 'inefficient' institution?. The question then becomes to what extent do EAs contribute to the efficiency of the education system?. They are no longer perceived as integral 'partners', but optional elements. Ranson (1992) argues the concern was not with the efficiency of LEA management but with their very existence. Values of 'partnership' , 'equity', 'equality', and 'educational need' have no place in this conception and discourse (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Levacic 1995).

The discourse of the 'three Es' has been applied generally in terms of an efficiency criterion. This discourse has limitations, internal conflicts and practical problems. Nevertheless, as with the previous discourses of 'Scottish myth' and 'partnership' it has been pervasive. In drawing upon supposed objective technical criteria and international evidence, this is arguably the most pervasive discourse. Pollitt (1990:176) suggests that the pervasiveness of this discourse lies in its political promotion and practical application, in such a pervasive manner that it defied practitioner resistance:

The 1980s have provided illustrations of just how far a particular approach can be pushed despite incoherence, startlingly narrow and unrealistic assumptions and the presence of obvious vested interests. Those charged with putting particular management reforms into practice seldom enjoy the luxury of prolonged reflection on these issues, and in any case are frequently acting under the twin imperatives of authoritative orders from above and tight timetables. What then matters may be getting something in place, in time, in minimal working order and in a form that bears at least superficial and rhetorical resemblance to the locally dominant managerial ideology.

Such a depiction may have accuracy for the required rapid introduction of DSM and Reorganisation. 'Management' reform often has pragmatic appeal and may benefit the interests of those in managerial positions (Pollitt 1990), e.g. head teachers (Bowe &

Ball 1992, Bullock & Thomas 1997, Levacic 1995). This may indicate that while managerial reform, empowering head teachers, can be supported, market reforms, empowering customers are less supported: "While the management techniques of business may hold some attraction the discipline of the market does not" (Bowe & Ball 1992:154). The discourse of 'economy, efficiency and effectiveness' may remain contentious, but it has influenced the language adopted, the values promoted, the practices advocated and the conceptualisation of the education system and roles within.

Criticisms of the New Right, NPM, 3 Es and the Nature of Reform

Notions of 'markets' and 'management' linked by a discourse of 'economy, efficiency and effectiveness' have influenced recent education and local government reforms. However, this is a controversial development. For supporters of New Right and NPM, markets are perceived as philosophically superior and practically beneficial (Chubb & Moe 1990,1992, Gray 1993, Seldon 1986, Tooley 1994). Supporters of market reform tend to be right-wing, demonstrating distaste for the fact that: "'Markets' are not popular amongst politically correct educationalists" (Tooley 1994:138). Among this 'group' are an extensive list of practitioners, empirical researchers, conceptual and theoretical explorations and philosophers, arguing the market is philosophically and morally indefensible, plus practically inappropriate (Ball 1990, Brighouse 1995, Cordingly & Kogan 1993, Grace 1994, Jonathan 1990, Keep 1992, McLaughlin 1994, Tett 1993, White 1994, Wringe 1994). 'Management' reform is more acceptable (Bowe & Ball 1992), but concern over its value base and practical application remains strong (Ball 1990,1993, Keep 1992, Menter *et al* 1995, Ranson & Stewart 1994, Simkins *et al* 1992, Walsh 1995). Most critics identify the need to either resist or adapt 'market' forces and 'management' reform to that more suitable to schools and EAs (Bowe & Ball 1992, Downes 1994, Keep 1992, Morris 1994, Ranson & Stewart 1994).

A fundamental issue is whether education is intrinsically a public or private service. State education is frequently supported on the basis of education being a 'public good' (Grace 1994). However, the criteria and definition of 'public goods' is problematic and frequently inconclusive (Tooley 1994). Tooley (1994:141) argues that on a strict definition of "indivisibility, non-rivalness and non-excludability", the individual

consumption of education is not technically a 'public good'. However, education may have significant 'externalities', whereby the collective consumption of education is characterised by indivisibility, non-rivalness and non-excludability (*ibid*: 144- 145). This is a point shared by many supporters of state provided education - it benefits society as a whole, e.g. through an educated civil society, employable youngsters and democratic development and hence does not equate with merely individual 'consumers' but a diverse collectivity of affected groups and individuals (Gee & Maden 1988, McLaughlin 1994, White 1994). One has moved from a narrow technical definition of a 'pure' public good to a broader definition including value judgements (Grace 1994, Mair & Moore 1993, Tooley 1994). There is general agreement that education is a 'public good' albeit an 'impure' and qualified one (Grace 1994, Tooley 1994).

However, Tooley (1994) argues that it is not philosophically and consequentially essential that education is publicly provided. Historically, education was provided without state intervention (*ibid*:138). Contrary to the 'newness' of the discourse of 'markets', Tooley (1994) argues that the pervasive and long-standing assumption of state provision and intervention needs to be challenged. In his philosophical enquiry and practical recommendations, Tooley (1994) maintains the need for state involvement, albeit in a limited form. The state's functions are setting the standards of a 'minimum' education, licensing an inspectorate to ensure standards are met, compelling children to participate in the education system and authorising the establishment of charities to identify and fund children who have not or cannot participate in the education system without support (*ibid*:139). In many respects it is only the latter that is different from present state functions (although the state does this directly at present) and in the absence of direct state provided education. Gray (1993) is a fierce advocate of markets, yet proposes that an 'enabling welfare state' is necessary. A 'free market' neither exists nor would it entail no state involvement (Cordingley & Kogan 1993, Tooley 1994).

Some advocates of state provision identify merits in introducing some market forces, but that there are 'moral limits' to the use of markets in education (McLaughlin 1994).

Many critics identify educational values as different from markets and business management (Brighouse 1995, Jonathan 1990, McLaughlin 1994, Tett 1993). Markets should be resisted, rejected or at least recognised for their true nature. Jonathan (1990) argues that markets do not abolish structural constraints and establish freedom, rather they create different structures and redistribute freedoms. Issues of inequality must be explored within the needs of the education system (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Brighouse 1995, Jonathan 1990, Levacic 1995, Tett 1993). Collective and individual needs cannot be resolved in an education market (Jonathan 1990). Educational values must be central to the education system and significantly limit the appropriateness of substantial 'market forces'. McLaughlin (1994) argues that if the case for education markets is dubious and unproven, why should the cost and difficulty of dismantling an extensive and functioning state provision be undertaken with little promise of profound improvement. This is a weak philosophical argument but a strong practical suggestion, especially in an era of fiscal restraint. Either way, problems in implementing market reforms exist (Bowe & Ball 1992, Bullock & Thomas 1997, Cordingley & Kogan 1993, Levacic 1995, Morris 1994, Ranson 1992). The education market is highly regulated, does not have a pure price mechanism, performance information is problematic, and the nature of producers and consumers ill-defined, 'immature' and in many cases inappropriate. Consumer choice does not fully exist and central planning remains.

Where support for 'market' related reform exists is in a belief for injecting greater efficiency through managerial reform (Morris 1994). However, concerns about value differences and practical consequences exist (Keep 1992, Menter *et al* 1995, Simkins *et al* 1992). Education is not the same as a business and therefore private sector techniques cannot be generically implanted (Keep 1992). A greater consideration of the specific management needs of the education service is required (*ibid*). The generation of 'strategic management' is widely supported (Hughes 1994, Levacic 1995, Ranson 1992, Ranson & Stewart 1994, Stewart 1989, Pollitt 1990), but is problematic to achieve (Walsh 1995) and perhaps especially so in education where 'operational' and 'strategic' matters often interact (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Levacic 1995, Ranson 1992). These difficulties are compounded by the speed of reform

(Simkins *et al* 1992) and the fact that change is not simply technical and structural but political affecting discourse and self- conception of practitioners (Menter *et al* 1995). It is suggested market methods should be combined with a professional service ethic (Morris 1994, Simkins *et al* 1992) - the nature and realisation of such a merger remains an open question. In both principle and practice, conflicts exist between 'management' requiring planning and often hierarchy and 'markets' assuming deregulation and decentralisation.

The introduction of markets and management hold potentially profound changes to the education system and beyond into the civil and governmental order (Bridges & McLaughlin 1994). Schools and EAs are significantly affected by reforms. The existence of EAs is called into question (Ranson 1992, Simkins *et al* 1992). This returns to the debate about the appropriate balance between centralisation and decentralisation, concerned essentially with the distribution of power (Simkins *et al* 1992). It should also be linked to the nature and needs of the education system, although this is frequently less well- developed. This is both a philosophical and a pragmatic question, it "requires complex judgements to be made of both an empirical and an evaluative kind...related to each other in an intricate way" (McLaughlin 1994:153). New Right and NPM arguments must be critiqued for their internal adequacy, their practical appropriateness and in comparison with alternative perspectives and criticisms.

Alternative Conceptions of Decentralisation and Reform

The New Right and NPM emphasise a particular form of decentralisation that advocates individualism, within a limited but integral centralisation of some responsibilities also. These developments are discernible in the policies of DSM and Reorganisation. While 'decentralisation' is generally supported (Burns *et al* 1994, Hambleton & Hoggett 1984, Hambleton *et al* 1989, Hoggett & Hambleton 1987, Sharpe 1979, Smith 1985), it is not necessarily in the forms previously outlined. Fundamentally, "'decentralisation' as a concept is politically neutral" (Hambleton & Hoggett 1984:5), therefore it can be endorsed, advocated and re- interpreted in many ways (Smith 1985). Decentralisation is a dynamic term, capturing "a process rather

than a state of affairs” (Stanyer & Smith 1976:88), and relative term, especially to ‘centralisation’ (Smith 1985).

‘Decentralisation’ is a general term that requires both exploration and contextualisation in its differing applications. Smith (1985:1) introduces the concept of decentralisation:

Lexicographically, decentralization means both reversing the concentration of administration at a single centre and conferring powers of local government. Decentralization involves the delegation of power to lower levels in a territorial hierarchy.

“The concept of decentralisation is multi-layered” ranging from purely spatial decentralisation, e.g. to improve access to services, to managerial decentralisation, involving budgets and local decision-making, and finally “decentralisation of political decision-making and policy” (Mair & Wright 1993:2- 3). Some forms of decentralisation are more comprehensive than others. Similarly, ‘decentralisation’ may be linked to either ‘markets’ and consumers or ‘democratisation’ and citizens, but neither are inherently necessary (Hambleton *et al* 1989, Burns *et al* 1994). Historically, the concept of decentralisation has been strongly linked to notions of local government, e.g. in the Liberal Model’s advocacy of service and democratic benefits (Smith 1985). However, the ‘democracy’ principle has been criticised by those advocating more direct and participative democracy (Burns *et al* 1994, Hoggett & Hambleton 1987, Sharpe 1979, Smith 1985); while the ‘service’ principle has been criticised by supporters of ‘consumer’ reform and market forces, such as the New Right and NPM.

Prior to the late 1970s, if reform of the ‘centralisation- decentralisation’ balance in education was to occur, the anticipated process was increased centralisation (Heller with Edwards 1992, Regan 1977), especially as a mechanism of control and potentially indoctrination. Neo-Marxists argued that central control does not need to be overt and may employ an instrumental and ideological use of local government, re-conceptualised as the ‘local state’ (Cockburn 1977, O’Connor 1973, Offe 1975,

Saunders 1983). The 'dual- state' thesis highlights the distinct functions of the local and national state in supporting the process of capital accumulation:

social investment expenditure by the state on such things as an economic infrastructure is centralized within bureaucratic and corporatist institutions, while social consumption, designed to reduce the cost to capital of labour, is assigned to tightly controlled local authorities (Smith 1985:38- 39).

The local state serves a repressive function also:

The maintenance of order and social cohesion requires state intervention at the local level for the purposes of coercion (through local police forces), support for the 'surplus population' (through social services) and legitimation (through schools, social work and programmes of public participation). (*ibid*: 39).

The 'local state' is firmly located within the capitalist order and central control, serving both to maintain and reproduce that system. Furthermore, in times of 'fiscal crisis' and 'legitimation crisis' (O'Connor 1973) , the 'local state' serves to be attributed blame and therefore preserve the legitimacy of the central state and capitalist order. Centralisation need not mean no decentralisation, while decentralisation does not automatically mean autonomy. The location of power and existence of financial autonomy are crucial (Mair & Wright 1993, Smith 1985).

From the late 1970s onwards, decentralisation has been promoted. Advocacy has come from political ideologies, plus managerial and technical developments (Hambleton & Hoggett 1984, Hambleton *et al* 1989, Hoggett 1987, Hoggett & Hambleton 1987, Smith 1985). The argument tends to be for decentralisation beyond local government, to "*sub* local authority decentralisation " (Hambleton *et al* 1989:40), e.g. neighbourhood councils (Burns *et al* 1994, Hambleton *et al* 1989, Hoggett & Hambleton 1987, Sharpe 1979) or ultimately to the individual as in public choice and anarchist prescriptions (for former see earlier in chapter, for latter Hargreaves 1986). Hence, a mixture of differing prescriptions for markets, direct democracy, neighbourhood councils, devolved school management, and true community education provided and determined by communities and the individuals within (Brighouse 1986, Hargreaves 1986).

The 'bureaucratic paternalism', large-scale organisation and monopoly character of post-war local government required reform by the late 1970s (Burns *et al* 1994). Both the political left and right advocated reform, however:

Whereas the new right offers markets, competition and individual choice, the new left offers strengthened democracy, participation and collective control. Whereas the right champions the individual consumer, the left advocates a new form of democratic collectivism built upon concepts of citizenship, consumer groups and communities. (Burns *et al* 1994:24).

While decentralisation could be perceived as 'radical' during the early 1980s, by the late 1980s and 1990s it had become increasingly common-place (*ibid*:4). Allied to this shift, was an increasing managerial agenda for change, suggesting 'consumerist solutions' within the public sector (Burns *et al* 1994, Hambleton *et al* 1989)¹⁴. (See Appendix E).

The advocacy of 'privatisation' links with the New Right, while 'consumerist solutions' link with NPM. However, these are not the only strategies. In Burns *et al*'s (1994) concept of 'new managerialism', managerial reform can be intended to make services more open to democratic representation and responsiveness. The development of local democracy is extended by the 'collectivist solutions' which propose greater decentralisation of provision, devolution of authority and democratisation (Burns *et al* 1994, Hambleton *et al* 1989). Market-based approaches offer 'exit, while non-market based approaches offer 'voice' (Hirschman 1970). 'Voice' in 'consumerist solutions' would be related to the nature of service provision, while in the 'collectivist solution' it is an extensive 'voice' of citizenship and direct democracy affecting the very nature and design of services to be provided. This relates not only to the nature of reform, but the purpose of reform and the relationships of those affected (see Appendix F). There is a range of options to reform the public sector. 'New managerialism' ranges from predominantly private sector models, such as advocated by NPM, to more democratic and public models. Burns *et al* (1994:30) argue that local government reform must not focus purely on the service principle but also intrinsically on the democratic principle: "any valid theory of local government cannot be built on management theory, it must be a *political* theory". While managerial and technical development may make certain

forms more practicable (Hoggett 1987, Smith 1985), the decision as to the nature, type and purpose of decentralisation is political (Burns *et al* 1994, Hoggett 1987, Smith 1985).

Table 7.2 Illustrative examples and strategic choices affecting local government¹⁵

<i>Strategic choice</i>	<i>Role of the market</i>	<i>Interpretation of governance</i>	<i>Community vs. Individual</i>	<i>Other key values</i>
Direct service provision	Very limited. Direct public provision preferred.	Strong in relation to service provision. More limited in relation to 'wider issues'.	Emphasis on individual as customer or service client.	Command Hierarchy Professional Bureaucracy
Commercial approach	Very wide. Market mechanisms should be used wherever possible.	Limited to specification of need and service client 'role', plus some wider issues.	Strong emphasis on individual as consumer.	Business values Choice (Exit capacity) Competition
Community governance	Neutral. Judge role of market on its capacity to contribute to wider objectives.	Strong. Local authority is there to respond to full range of community needs.	Strong emphasis on individual as consumer.	Citizenship (city- wide) Networking Representative Democracy
Neighbourhood approach	Limited. More emphasis on voluntary sector and community initiative.	Strong at neighbourhood level. Less emphasis at authority- wide level.	Strong emphasis on local communities, less so authority- wide.	Citizenship (local) Participative Democracy Community

(Source: Leach 1996a: 32).

Although the New Right and NPM have influenced political debate and practical reform during the 1980s and 1990s, they are not the only conceptualisation and prescription of reform. Issues of markets and management must be considered alongside more traditionally political issues of governance, community, civil society and state (Burns *et al* 1994, Leach *et al* 1996). Within the limits of statute and political control, there are various 'choices' available to local government in terms of service provision and governance style (See Table 7.2). Government policy and legislation encourages a shift from direct service provision to a commercial approach. Nevertheless, within this trend, local authorities may be introducing community governance or neighbourhood approach strategies or some hybrid form of organisation (Burns *et al* 1994, Hambleton *et al* 1989, Hoggett & Hambleton 1987, Mair & Wright

1993). These 'strategies' may be informed by political choices and ideals but they require differing organisational forms, roles and cultures also (Leach 1996b).

Both pure and politically- mediated 'market' and 'private management' models have been resisted more in Scotland (Arnott 1993, Arnott *et al* 1993, Arnott & Munn 1994, Deem 1994, Raab 1993b, Paterson 1997, Pignatelli 1994). Deem (1994:30) argues that evidence of Scottish "resistance to the strong state and the free market" suggests that deterministic assumptions of widespread structural reform need careful consideration. Burns *et al* (1994:146) identify: "four dimensions of decentralisation: (1) localisation; (2) restructuring for flexibility; (3) devolved management; and (4) cultural change". Local government reorganisation is intended to create greater localism, both through smaller local units and decentralisation to area committees. DSM is a form of devolved management, although it lies between 'nominal devolution' and 'devolution' rather than extensive 'radical devolution' (Burns *et al* 1994:101- 104, see appendix G). At a time of change new structures can and should be developed (Coopers & Lybrand Deloitte 1992). Ideally, such change in nature, structure and organisation should be accompanied by 'cultural change' also. However, change on all four dimensions is difficult to achieve (Burns *et al* 1994). It is necessary to consider the ideal, but also to juxtapose this with empirical evidence.

The promotion of 'markets' and 'management' must be recognised as one option, albeit a strongly promoted one. In theory, there are competing possibilities, such as relating to governance and democracy. Most writers would argue for a more 'efficient' public system, but unlike some of the New Right and NPM proposals, this should be inherently linked to developing the 'effectiveness' of the education and local government systems, say on criteria of educational need and democracy. There are political judgements inherent in the theoretical and conceptual arguments supported for reforming the public sector. A specific discourse of 'reform' can be constructed. There is the need for philosophical investigation and critique. However, alongside such potentially 'abstract' considerations, there is the need for thorough empirical investigation concerning the applicability and application of theories and concepts of reform. In practice, the debate between 'markets' and 'hierarchies' is not absolute and

polarised. Markets and hierarchies may co- exist, alongside complex and evolving networks of relationships.

Markets, Hierarchies and Networks

In developing understanding of changing policies and practices, the concepts of 'markets, hierarchies and networks' have been advocated as useful devices (Maidment & Thompson 1993, Thompson *et al* 1991). Exploration and application of these to understanding the education and local government systems has been advocated and utilised (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Cochrane 1993, Levacic 1993, 1995, Raab 1994a). Markets, hierarchy and networks are distinct models of co-operation linked to a view of efficiency and appropriate form (Frances *et al* 1991, Maidment & Thompson 1993). Each 'model is an 'ideal type' (Maidment & Thompson 1993) serving analytical purposes (Frances *et al* 1991). In brief, 'markets' assume co-ordination through a natural 'spontaneous' order; 'hierarchy' assumes the need for formal administrative co- ordination; while 'networks' recognised that informal and changeable mechanisms of co- ordination are potential (*ibid*: 3- 4).

The models assume that co- ordination is always possible and are necessarily abstract simplifications of complex social processes (Frances *et al* 1991, Maidment & Thompson 1993). The models are limited, partial explanations that do not exhaustively capture the complexity of social life, co- ordination and change (Frances *et al* 1991, Maidment & Thompson 1993). There is the need for both conceptual exploration and practical investigation. However, Frances *et al* (1991:5) propose the study of 'markets, hierarchy and networks' as a useful analytical development:

an attempt to provide a middle- level theory which is not totally subsumed under either the grand theories that typify much of social science nor a blind empiricism that could equally pervade it. This might be termed a kind of 'meso- theory'.

While the notion of 'meso- theory' requires greater clarification and consideration, the nature of study advocated advances our understanding, e.g. of the education system beyond abstract ideals espoused by the New Right or narrowly pragmatic prescriptions of 'education management' studies (Ozga 1992).

i) Markets

In principle, 'market' is an economic concept that relates to a system of co-ordination linked to the existence of buyers and sellers, exchange, price, competition, product differentiation and notions of efficiency (Frances *et al* 1991, Levacic 1993a). There are two essential bodies of thought connected to the promotion of 'markets', neo-classical and Austrian. Both approaches advocate the extension of markets, but differ in the detail of their conceptualisation of the 'market' (see appendix H).

The neo-classical approach emphasises markets as the source of equilibrium, based upon the balance between marginal cost and price; therefore, the price mechanism is crucial. Perfect information is assumed. Efficiency is intrinsic and can only be achieved through market forces. Neo-classical analysis rejects Keynesian economics as it denies perfect competition and market equilibrium. Nevertheless, market failures occur and 'externalities' exist. Hence, for 'public goods', state intervention and regulation is accepted (Levacic 1993a). By contrast, Austrian economic theory rejects the ideas of market failures, perfect competition, perfect information and equilibrium. Rather through disequilibrium and imperfect information, competition and entrepreneurship will be encouraged to produce the greatest market based response and activity. The decentralisation of information and decision-making is advocated. State intervention is discouraged in public provision. However, Austrian analysis recognises a role for the state in establishing and maintaining the 'framework' and rules for the operation of the market and ensuring basic social justice "prior to engaging in market transactions" (*ibid*: 43). The state's role may entail an element of hierarchy. Although markets are to pervade external relations, within organisations hierarchical control may be more efficient and effective (Levacic 1993a, McGuinness 1991, Williamson 1975). Both neo-classical and Austrian economic analysis have influenced New Right thought, although the "neo-classical approach is the dominant one" (Levacic 1993a: 49).

Nevertheless, a 'pure market' has not been realised nor applied in the education and local government. Changes are more akin to a 'quasi-market' (Ball *et al* 1994, Bartlett 1993, Bowe & Ball 1992, Bullock & Thomas 1997, Cochrane 1993, Frances *et al* 1991, Glatter & Woods 1994, Leach *et al* 1996, Levacic 1993b, 1994, 1995, Prior 1993, Raab *et al* 1997, Ranson & Stewart 1994, Walsh 1995). The introduction of

LMS/ DSM, GMS, open enrolment, formula funding and performance measurement are integral to this development (Bartlett 1993, Glatter & Woods 1994, LeGrand & Bartlett 1993a, Levacic 1994). Quasi- markets differ significantly from 'pure' markets:

They are 'markets' because they replace monopolistic state providers with competitive independent ones. They are 'quasi' because they differ from conventional markets... in one or more of three ways: non- profit organisations competing for public contracts, sometimes in competition with for- profit organisations; consumer purchasing power either centralised in a single purchasing agency or allocated to users in the form of vouchers rather than cash; and, in some cases, the consumers represented in the market by agents instead of operating by themselves. (LeGrand & Bartlett 1993a: 10).

Differences in nature and outcome may emerge between 'quasi' and 'pure' markets.

Bartlett & LeGrand (1993) suggest 'quasi- markets' should be evaluated on criteria of efficiency, responsiveness, choice and equity which are promoted and controversial in markets in welfare (Ball *et al* 1994, Bartlett 1993, Bartlett & LeGrand 1993, Bullock & Thomas 1997, Levacic 1994,1995). The conditions for successful 'quasi- markets' are derived from economic market theory. Firstly, market structure should enable competition and the price mechanism. Ideally, there should be a variety of purchasers and providers, the existence of entry and exit to the market, and price balancing supply and demand. In the 'quasi- market' , the potential for monopoly is pervasive and the price mechanism can be problematic. Secondly, purchasers and providers must have access to accurate and appropriate information concerning the markets and 'products' involved. In the quasi- market, costing services can be difficult. However, information remains important to both billing and monitoring procedures, which are integral. Thirdly, transaction costs and uncertainty exist and must be measured against potential efficiency gains. Fourthly, market systems assume financial and profit incentives as essential motivators. This may be problematic and require development in the quasi-market, as welfare rather than financial incentives traditionally dominated; in addition, purchasers and users are not necessarily the same. Finally, quasi- markets are not purely based on ability to pay, rather a notion of 'need' involving a consideration of

'equity' is apparent. These criteria and conditions amount to a 'theory of quasi-markets' (Bartlett & LeGrand 1993).

The arguments concerning education and 'quasi-markets' are varied. Some argue that market forces in education are "very limited" (Walsh 1996: xx), while others perceive a profound practical and ideological shift (Ball *et al* 1994). It is posited education has developed characteristics associated with 'quasi-markets' (Bartlett 1993, LeGrand & Bartlett 1993b). However, empirical evidence suggests a range of principles, perceptions, practices and outcomes require investigation (Ball *et al* 1994, Bartlett 1993, Glatter & Woods 1994, Levacic 1994). Efficiency gains may accrue, but effectiveness is difficult to prove, consumer choice is problematic and perhaps inappropriate, producer control remains (Ball *et al* 1994, Cordingley & Kogan 1993, Glatter & Woods 1994, Levacic 1995, Propper *et al* 1994, Ranson & Stewart 1994, Walsh 1996). While some perceive market forces as resulting in the 'erosion' of the 'middle tier' of the EA (Walsh 1996), others suggest that "these quasi-market relationships are perceived by some in LEAs as potentially fruitful" (Cordingley & Kogan 1993:114). The need for regulation and mechanisms for redress and resolution (Walsh 1996) may provide a role for the EA (Cordingley & Kogan 1993, LeGrand & Bartlett 1993b). The implications of quasi-markets for education is not straightforward or proven, there is a need for empirical investigation concerning the nature of quasi-markets, their application in local government and education, with what implications, outcomes and longevity?.

This necessitates development of the 'theory of quasi-markets'. LeGrand & Bartlett's (1993a) criteria are derived from economic and abstract theorisation, generating possibilities and hypotheses, which are then 'tested' in empirical settings. As Raab *et al* (1997:153) explain the theory of quasi-markets is not perfect for understanding the emerging education system, as several of the 'conditions' are not realised:

The research suggests that cultural factors (such as antipathy to the individualistic and competitive values of the market), local traditions (such as established relationships of co-operation and support between schools and

parents), teachers' values, beliefs and attitudes, and general satisfaction with the status quo have militated against meeting them.

Markets evolve and are re- interpreted in local circumstances and complex ways:

...a complex of planned, arbitrary, historical , spontaneous and producer and consumer factors that constitute the education market. In all this the LEA continues to have a role of some significance ... None of the currently employed concepts- such as planned or regulated markets, consumer sovereignty, freedom of choice- do justice to this complexity or begin to describe or anticipate its effects either in terms of quality and efficiency or social justice and patterns of educational opportunity. We need a set of more specific and carefully grounded concepts and descriptors if the analysis of quasi- markets is to move forward. (Ball *et al* 1994:93).

The general theory of quasi- markets needs to be developed both in its content and in relation to empirical investigation. For example, issues of behaviour in quasi- markets, such as the desirability and stability of quasi- markets, motivation of actors involved and the nature of regulation; plus issues relating to institutional change, such as the extent to which 'social networks' and 'social embeddedness' affect this, or the development of 'voice' rather than 'exit' in quasi- markets, offer potentially fruitful areas of exploration and development (Bartlett *et al* 1994a).

The education (quasi) market is evolving in differing and unanticipated ways. The necessity for regulation indicates that hierarchical control may remain alongside the development of 'market' forces (Walsh 1996). While at school- level, competition may not be complete, enabling co- operation and collaboration to continue and develop (Aitchison 1995). The 'quasi- market' is a term requiring development in the context of theoretical enquiry and empirical investigation of the complex development of quasi- markets , plus potential hierarchy and networks.

ii) Hierarchy

Hierarchy is perceived as synonymous with 'bureaucracy' and the operation of government (Mitchell 1991,1993). It is assumed to be opposite to 'market':

In a market each element (individual, firm) pursues its own interest and the interaction between the elements produces a collective outcome- the market co-ordinates the separate activities. Co-ordination by hierarchy is different in that the actions of similar elements (individuals, firms) are to some extent constrained. Hierarchy presupposes an already determined outcome or purpose... such an outcome can be broken down into a set of sub- processes. So hierarchy depends upon ideas of organization, task specialization and rationality. In addition hierarchies involve a stratification of authority and the following of rules... whereas bureaucracy/ hierarchy is centralized, the market is decentralized. Hierarchies implement decisions that are made by those in authority; the market gives more autonomy to individual agents. (Mitchell 1991:105- 106).

There are general features of hierarchy: “the subdivision of tasks, the pyramidal structure of organization, the nature of individual activity within such large organisations, the gradation of autonomy” which are distinctive (*ibid*). Hierarchies can be relatively simple or involve complex and multilevel organisation (Mitchell 1993).

The idea of bureaucracy is linked with the work of Max Weber. Bureaucracy emerged as a consequence of the need for greater structure, control, precision and calculability necessary for large organisations to function effectively (Albrow 1970). It is associated with the development of rationality and legality. Bureaucracy is linked to “the non-profit- making activity of public sector organizations” (Mitchell 1991:106). Employment in bureaucratic hierarchies relies on efficient and neutral administration, meritocratic advancement, life- long career and obedience to discipline and control. For Weber, ‘ideal’ bureaucracy was ‘rational’ and ‘monocratic’ (Albrow 1970, Blau 1963).

Bureaucratic organisation and hierarchical control characterised government activity and administration in the post- war period (Mitchell 1993). Public provision was necessary due to market failures, the existence of public goods and ‘natural monopolies’. Historically, markets had failed to meet economic and social needs. Hence, the decision to initiate and extend state planning and provision. As the size of

organisation grows, hierarchy is deemed the appropriate and efficient mechanism to secure co-ordination and effective functioning. The characteristics of hierarchy can be found in the private sector also. Hierarchy can be characteristic of large organisations in general, as they require a mechanism to co-ordinate large numbers of people and ensure efficient administration (Mitchell 1991,1993, Jacques 1991). Furthermore, even where the external environment is characterised by 'market' co-ordination, the internal organisation may adopt hierarchy to ensure control, co-ordination and efficiency (McGuinness 1991, Mitchell 1993). The process of privatisation does not necessarily end hierarchy (Mitchell 1993).

Hierarchy has received substantial criticism (Hales 1993, Jacques 1991). It lacks structural and organisational flexibility and responsiveness, preventing human creativity and freedom, and failing to link activity to efficient market allocation of resources (Jacques 1991, Mitchell 1993, Ranson & Stewart 1994). The New Right and Public Choice attacked hierarchy as failing to deliver the benefits of market forces and as generating bureaucratic self-interest and maximisation. Hierarchy was not market and was therefore inefficient. From the 1980s onwards, reforms have been introduced with the intention of creating markets in the public sector and thereby reducing and abolishing hierarchy. However, a complete shift from hierarchy to market has not occurred:

So the story of government management over the last decade is a complex one. ...some aspects of hierarchical co-ordination remain constant, whether the organization is private or public, and that the processes of co-ordination within hierarchies in both sectors can be seen as relatively comparable. However, the nature of co-ordination between the hierarchies may also have changed significantly. Finally, there may have been changes in the structure and operation of the hierarchy itself: the numbers of levels may have decreased or the relationship between individuals within a hierarchical organization may have changed. Structures may have become 'flatter' or 'looser'. (Mitchell 1993:6).

In their external environment, 'market' reforms require a system of regulation and this may create a new form of public hierarchical control (*ibid*: 27). Market reforms and hierarchy may co- exist, emerging in unanticipated ways.

In education and local government, market- based reforms have been accompanied by a maintenance and sometimes reassertion of hierarchy. Schools are subject to market forces but also regulation by EA and central government. Local government is characterised by hierarchy and markets. The creation of contracts creates a new and partly 'market' relationship, but requires the 'hierarchy' of oversight, regulation and redress (Walsh 1995). The notion of decentralising operational management but centralising strategic management implies hierarchy. Within both EAs and especially schools, the shift to 'external' market forces has been accompanied by the development of internal hierarchy of management and control (Bowe & Ball 1992, Boyd 1997). Legally, central government, EAs and schools could be perceived as a hierarchy of authority and command. However, these descriptions are not exhaustive. Traditional notions of 'partnership' and recent reforms encouraging a multitude of 'players' into the education sector, suggest the existence of networks of dynamic and diverse relationships also. As with 'markets', the model of 'hierarchy' can be interpreted in various ways (Beetham 1991) and these 'models' will only partially accord with real practices (Mitchell 1993). Mitchell's (1993) analysis suggest the existence of 'external' markets, 'internal' hierarchies, yet differing relations between various agencies, this suggest the need to develop the concept of 'network'.

iii) Network

Thompson (1993:51) states: "Networks are increasingly popular as explanatory devices":

that set of coordinative relationships that cannot be defined as either quintessentially market based on the one hand or as reducible to hierarchically based ones on the other has appeared as an attractive object of investigation by those attempting to come to terms with contemporary transformations in the structure of organizational arrangements and decision- making processes. (*Ibid*).

However, while offering the potential for development, the concept of 'network' requires greater precision and clarity of definition, it cannot be all that is not market nor hierarchy and sometimes contain elements of both.

Network analysis can be derived from organisational theory and/ or social science (Thompson 1991, Walsh 1995). Therefore, it focuses on actors and structures in different ways from either markets or hierarchy. Individuals are perceived to interact, not market's autonomous actors, influencing behaviour, which is related to and influences the wider social structure. Organisational and social structure are perceived to be more informal, changeable and diverse than in hierarchy. Knoke & Kuklinski (1991:175- 176) explain:

A network is generally defined as a specific type of relation linking a defined set of persons, objects or events (see Mitchell, 1969). Different types of relations identify different networks... The set of persons, objects or events on which a network is defined may be called the actors or nodes. These elements possess some attribute(s) that identify them as members of the same equivalence class for purposes of determining the network of relations among them... But network analysis must take into account both the relations that occur and those that do not exist among the actors... The configuration of present and absent ties between the network actors reveals a specific network structure. Structures vary dramatically in form, from isolated structure in which no actor is connected to any other, to the saturated structure in which every actor is directly linked to every other individual. More typical of real networks are various intermediate structures in which some actors are more extensively connected among themselves than are others... The structure of relations among actors and the location of individual actors in the network have important behavioral, perceptual and attitudinal consequences both for the individual units and for the system as a whole.

Networks link issues of structure and agency in a different manner from markets or hierarchy, they suggest also the potential variety and dynamics of co-ordination.

The outline of 'networks' provided is a very broad and loose definition, this may create methodological problems (Thompson 1993). Knoke & Kuklinski (1991:176) perceive this breadth and range of 'network' as a positive attribute, as it enables a variety of research foci and differing purposes. The diversity of approaches applying the concept of 'network' demonstrates the need to be clear about the concept of 'network' and its particular application for one's research purpose (Johnson & Lawrence 1991, Lorenz 1991, Rhodes 1991, Streeck & Schmitter 1991, Thompson 1991, Thompson *et al* 1991, Werbner 1991). Thompson (1993) suggests the need to focus upon 'network attributes' of solidarity, altruism, loyalty, reciprocity and trust, which "best differentiate the specific features of a network model from either a hierarchical one or a market one" (*ibid*:54). Solidarity is "attributed to the sharing of common experience" (*ibid*). Its existence, nature and strength must be considered (Durkheim 1933). Secondly, altruism suggest the existence of selflessness and hence the desire to cooperate and network. True selflessness is unrealistic and therefore consideration of the nature of action and benefits and consequences of doing so must be undertaken. Thirdly, loyalty indicates why networks would form and continue to function. Loyalty accepts the status quo. However, it must not be 'indifference' and 'passive' 'acceptance', but more active and positive attributes of 'faith', 'affection', 'trust', 'duty' and 'obligation' (Thompson 1993:57). In practice, 'loyalty' may be combined with 'voice':

In its literal sense 'voice' has to do with the power of language. Thus one of the ways networks might be secured- one of the ways by which they are organized- is through the activity of *argument, debate and persuasion...* the 'art of rhetoric'. Networks can thus be articulated in a rhetorical or discursive fashion. In fact, this is an important way networks operate. Given that they are often informal, cooperative, local, small- scale, and the like, they are amenable to these kinds of devices. Given that they rely upon the attributes of trust, affection, sympathy, and so on, consultation and negotiation are likely to be strongly present in the practices of networks. Consultation and negotiation are nothing but the exercise of language and rhetoric. (*Ibid*: 57-58).

The fifth 'attribute' is reciprocity, which stabilises the co-ordination of networks through balancing giving and receiving and creating a moral sense of obligation.

Finally, trust is essential to ensure co-ordination and co-operation of networks. Trust is “allied to” a belief in the reputation of oneself and the network and the existence of consistency in relationships (*ibid*: 59). These attributes are not mutually exclusive and collectively “act to generate a *solidaristic- cooperative* behaviour between network agents” (*ibid*).

Thompson’s (1993) proposition of ‘attributes’ of networks offers a basis to deconstruct the notion of networks and to apply the concept to empirical and theoretical investigation. However, there remain two fundamental issues: firstly, do these attributes predetermine and create networks or are they created by networks?; secondly, if these attributes create co-ordination, how is co-ordination maintained and sustained?. Rational economic theory suggests a reluctance to co-operate and the unintended consequences of individual actions. However, rather than the existence of co-operation *a priori*, there is the possibility that co-operation may *evolve*. Thompson (1993:62) explains:

co-operation does not necessarily have to be either ‘taught’ or ‘imposed’. The crucial issue at stake is the need for a ‘cooperative outlook’ to be fostered.

If relationships evolve, it is possible also that interests will not be fully known until the network is established and evolves also. Finally, economic analyses of rational man assume individualised, selfish, non- trusting and non- cooperative behaviour. However, some individuals have a tendency to trust and co-operate, therefore it is the enhancement of this tendency rather than its establishment which becomes crucial (*ibid*). The concept of ‘network’ is not simply discerning predetermined attributes.

There are criticisms of ‘networks’ relating to the analyses and nature of this concept. A broad concept of ‘network’ could become all- embracing, characterising all aspects of social, political and organisational life. There is a need for careful definition and delimitation of the concept of ‘network’ and the nature of ‘network’ being analysed. If one accepts the existence of networks, as distinct from markets or hierarchy, one must critique their nature. Unlike the formality and ‘procedural rationality’ of markets and hierarchies, networks assume ‘informal rationality’ (Thompson 1993:71). Networks are subject to discretion, having positive attributes of flexibility, dynamism and responsibility, but also negative issues of corruption, non-democratic and the

generation of fear and suspicion (*ibid*). This raises questions relating to social and governmental order and the nature of citizenship. Networks offer an additional dimension to the analysis of social, political and organisational life, however they must be treated with caution and criticism.

The notion of 'networks' has influenced analyses of education and local government systems. Recent reforms are perceived as a 'fragmentation' of the public sector and requiring 'network management' (Alexander 1988,1990,1991, Alexander & Orr 1994b, Dunleavy & Hood 1994, Walsh 1995). As the boundaries between public and private sector become blurred, the public sector itself becomes subject to internal and quasi- market forces and a range of new actors become involved in public provision, defined by Walsh (1995:199) as the emergence of "public service networks". Schools and EAs are becoming located within complex and evolving networks of relationships (Levacic 1995). Alexander (1988) suggests that if local government does not recognise its role as the centre of an emerging network, it will undermine its role and rationale. Schools have been co-operating and collaborating with each other in the 'education market' (Bridges & Husbands 1996, Bullock & Thomas 1997, Macbeth *et al* 1995, Ranson & Tomlinson 1994). Despite the assumption of individualisation, atomisation and competition in markets, networks exist.

The emergence of 'collaboration', 'co-operation', 'consortia' and 'partnership' in the education system can be perceived as an attempt to reject the education market, to resist this, to accept the market and strive to manage better within the market system, or to seek alternative methods of operation (Bridges & Husbands 1996, Husbands 1996, Macbeth *et al* 1995, Ranson & Tomlinson 1994). The existence of collaboration does not negate the existence of markets. Even in the private sector, organisations may collaborate and compete in order to secure long- term security and managerial advantages, hence the development of collaboration in education can be viewed as akin to this development (Keep 1992). The development of collaboration, consortia and partnership may be a response to the market enabling schools to 'survive' better within market forces (Bridges & Husbands 1996a). A variety of different types of networks and actors both within and out-with the traditional education system are

emerging¹⁶ (Gallagher 1995, Hargreaves 1996, Harbour 1996, Husbands 1996, Johnson & Barber 1996, Leech 1995, Macbeth *et al* 1995a, Monck & Husbands 1996, Ranson & Tomlinson 1994, Roberts 1994, Simkins *et al* 1992, Upton & Cozens 1996, Wallace 1996, Warwick 1995, West 1996). Although some of these networks pre-date the market reforms of the late 1980s, the form of network emerging is perceived as a response to the education market, facilitated by technological developments in some cases, and requiring cultural change in all cases (Bridges & Husbands 1996a, Glegg 1995, McCreath & Maclachlan 1995, Upton 1996, Warwick 1995). Writers advocate the development of collaboration and co-operation as a means to protect the future education service (Bridges & Husbands 1996a, Macbeth *et al* 1995a, Ranson & Tomlinson 1994). However, a narrow vision of market based consortia and collaboration is criticised on basis of principle and practice (Heller with Edwards 1992). Rather a broad vision of 'partnership', 'collegiality' and 'community' is espoused which advocates improvements grounded in a conception of public collective education and local governance (Bridges & Husbands 1996, Evans & Lunt 1995, Fielding 1996, Glatter 1995, Husbands 1996, Macbeth *et al* 1995, McCreath & Maclachlan 1995). This notion of 'partnership' is broader than the traditional conception (Briault 1976), involving new 'partners' of parent and community, with responsibilities for community, educational and governance purpose. While distinctively 'local' in its nature, it can have a global dimension (McCreath & Maclachlan 1995).

'Networks' offer scope for further understanding of the education system. Traditionally, the education system was perceived as hierarchical, in recent years market reforms have been introduced, yet in practice hierarchy, markets and other forms of co-ordination and relationships exist. Hence, the need to develop further categorisation and conceptualisation. Network analysis provides a starting point on this journey. However, the notion of 'networks' is broad and general, therefore it requires careful consideration, definition and criticism. The concept of 'network' must be developed as well as empirical investigation concerning the emergence and existence of 'networks' in education and local government.

A Combination of Markets, Hierarchy and Networks?

The models are not completely discrete and demarcated in practice. Mitchell (1993) demonstrates that different models may apply to the internal co-ordination of an organisation, the external co-ordinations of the same organisation and the different processes and functions of an organisation. In education and local government a mixture of the models appear to exist and be evolving (Cochrane 1993, Levacic 1993b).

The mixture of models has evolved historically. At the origins of the education system, markets and networks were important. However, by the late 19th century with state involvement, hierarchy became dominant. The 1944, 1945 and 1946 Acts created the 'partnership' of central government, local government and school. Although a hierarchical arrangement was legislated, a "diffusion of power between the three partners" was proposed (Levacic 1993b: 169) operating like a 'policy network' (*ibid*, Rhodes 1991, McPherson & Raab 1988). Levacic (1993b: 172) explains that the 'policy network' is a type of "resource dependency or exchange theory" as each partner was "interdependent" but had differing resources and roles at their command, with the school and EA especially powerful. By the mid- 1970s, there was increasing concern about the 'partnership' as it existed. Throughout the 1980s, reforms began to reassert central control and introduce market forces. This was accelerated and imposed by ERA:

The 1988 Act and subsequent legislation have markedly strengthened control by the centre, particularly the DFE, and at the same time replaced LEAs' hierarchical control of schools by quasi- market relationships. The centre has asserted itself as the dominant player in the policy network and in effect abandoned notions of partnership.(Levacic 1993b: 178).

Recent reforms have promoted the co-ordination of hierarchy and market, although networks may be evident. It has been suggested that 'policy network' is still useful for understanding Scottish education where the Scottish Office operates within the policy network rather than imposing hierarchical control (Levacic 1993b, McPherson & Raab 1988) and where market mechanisms are less well supported (Arnott & Munn 1994, Deem 1994, McDowall 1994, Paterson 1997, Pignatelli 1994, Raab *et al* 1997).

Cochrane (1993) analyses the same historical period of local government through the different 'lenses' of each model as applied to the study of 'central- local relations'. All three models offer insights and understandings, but in isolation each model is partial and does not fully explain the practical reality. The principles of *ultra vires*, the lack of general competence for local government and the capacity for central intervention and determination of local government function and finance all indicate that British central - local relations are hierarchical as implicit in the notion of an 'unitary state' (*ibid*). Yet, complete central control cannot be assured, local resistance to central change and policy has pervaded. Local government- inspired initiatives have emerged and been resilient, while central policy and fiscal direction have not always been fully realised or resulted in unanticipated consequences. Hierarchy is present in the existence of legal and formal powers, but does not fully explain the existence of local discretion and failure to exert central control fully.

Market models are not especially concerned with central- local relations but rather with introducing market forces. Cochrane (1993) focuses on the policy implications of market- type legislation, especially for local government services, finance and CCT. He concedes that there has been only "mixed success" (*ibid*: 223). Resistance and unintended consequences have emerged. The introduction of 'markets' did not abolish central- local issues, rather it has been viewed as a mechanism to exert central control and accordingly met with local resistance. Furthermore, some public services are essentially monopolistic and tend to require bureaucratic organisation, or at least a form of hierarchy. In the emerging central and local tensions and "mixing" of "market and hierarchical models of co-ordination" "increased confusion" rather than greater clarity has emerged (*ibid*: 225).

Cochrane (1993:228) posits: "Central - local relations look more like a complex maze than an expression of hierarchical or market models". Neither approach adequately explores the apparent processes of resistance, negotiation and bargaining. Cochrane (*ibid*:228- 229) draws on 'policy networks':

for Rhodes, it is, strictly, inappropriate to talk of 'central- local relations as if there were a centre which could control local agencies. The system is more complex and fragmented than such a phrase suggests. For him, the system of 'central- local' relations is a product of many such networks, linking centre and locality often apparently independently of each other , but also influencing each other in ways which are rarely understood by those involved.

A 'policy network' is: "the systems of (vertical) linkages between professionals (and associated councillors) and civil servants responsible for policy within departments of central government" (*ibid* :229). The assumption of 'central command', as in hierarchy, will fail due to the "multi- form maze of interdependence" (Rhodes 1985: 55). However, Cochrane (1993) warns that the concept of 'policy network' is partial and requires development. Rhodes presents a model of professional and relatively stable 'vertical' policy networks. However, this has difficulty dealing with the increasing politicisation occurring at local and national levels. Furthermore, Rhodes' concept is linked to activity within the state and therefore is inherently concerned with 'central- local relations' albeit in a re- defined manner. Such a conception fails to account for a wider conception of 'political activity' especially at local levels. Networks offer a greater understanding of the complexity, dynamism and diversity of co-ordination within the government system, but remain a partial and problematic model in practice.

Each model has utility in analysing the emerging education and local government system, but each is partial and does not fully explain the practical reality (Cochrane 1993, Mitchell 1993). There is scope in 'mixing' the three models in order to develop fuller understanding (Cochrane 1993, Mitchell 1993). These models hold the key not only to analysing the past, but to understanding the present and predicting the future (Ling 1993). While all of this seems a worthy task, it requires greater consideration and clarification. All three models are broad and have varying attributes, combining the three models increases the scope of analyses but increases also the potential for confusion and inadequate interpretation. Any approach involving these models, must be aware of the defining features of the model, plus the scope and nature of study. Frances *et al* (1991:5) proposed the concepts of 'markets, hierarchies and networks' as

a “middle -level theory”, while this offers some benefits over abstract theorisation or a-theoretical detailed empiricism, it raises issues also. Models are abstract and therefore they require to be ‘tested’ against empirical evidence. One should not argue that an ‘education market’ exists without actually exploring if it does in practice. Similarly, the ‘middle- theory’ and ‘models’ lack the wider consideration and exploration offered by theorisation. The nature of the models themselves must be explored and critiqued, as well as their capacity to understand the emerging reality. In exploring both the nature of the models and their practical application, judgement cannot be merely technical but must be value- based and evaluative (Levacic 1993b).

Conclusions

This chapter has considered key conceptual and theoretical issues currently impacting upon the nature and analyses of education and local government policy. It has sought to critique these theories and concepts, both for their internal nature and for the ability to adequately explain and analyse what is actually occurring. By their very nature, theories and models contain a certain level of abstraction, however if they have little resemblance to reality one must not adopt them as descriptive devices without adequate consideration.

The New Right has been extremely influential in promoting the nature of reform of government and public sector (Chitty 1989, Simon 1992). Arguably, the Conservatives since 1979 and the rise of ‘Thatcherism’ were generally content to adopt New Right prescriptions and apply them as justification for economic and social reform. Cordingley & Kogan (1993:10) explain: “Values are important because they are asserted and accepted and not because they provide logical or scientific explanations of actions”. Furthermore, “because education is so value imbued, the analysis of preferred values is an essential starting point for the interpretation of policies and the structures created to implement them” (*ibid*). The values endorsed by the New Right relate to freedom, individualism and consequently markets. These are different values from those inherent to education and local government systems, e.g. equity, egalitarianism, democracy and community, associated with discourses of ‘Scottish myth’ and ‘partnership’ (Bowe & Ball 1992, Bullock & Thomas 1997, Burns *et al* 1994, Levacic 1995, Ranson & Tomlinson 1994).

The New Right adopts economic theory and prescriptions. It is 'fiercely critical' of Keynesian economics and the welfare state as existed in the post-war period. Rather market forces, privatisation and self-responsibility are advocated. Nevertheless, there is recognition of 'market failures', 'public goods', 'externalities' and 'natural monopolies'. Markets are not always optimal or appropriate, hence the need for state intervention and possibly provision. Whether education is a 'public good' is controversial. However, in terms of its value rather than purely technical criteria, education is both a public and private good, therefore scope for state involvement remains. Furthermore, even in a market system, state regulation is required. Although, the New Right advocate markets, even in principle, there is a recognition of the need for a state role and hierarchy also. In both theory and practice, there is a need for greater consideration of what the scope and limitations of the market are.

That some form of 'public sector' will remain is inherent in NPM analyses and prescriptions. However, they argue the public sector should become more like the private sector, especially in management techniques. Thus, for NPM, 'management' and 'managerialism' are the defining concepts. Managerial reform holds more attraction than privatisation to those in the public sector (Bowe & Ball 1992). Nevertheless, the basic assumption of NPM that the public sector can be improved via generic and private management techniques requires careful criticism. Firstly, there appears to be differences between private and public sectors; and secondly, within the public sector there are a diversity of natures and needs also. Nevertheless, NPM-type reforms have been applied to both education and local government, therefore one needs to consider not only the conceptual but also the empirical development of this strategy.

Some critics have suggested that reform has been at the level of rhetoric rather than substance. However, there is a growing literature which suggests that change in language and discourse is insidious and indicates potentially profound shifts in culture, perception and behaviour. The New Right and NPM are linked by a discourse of 'economy, efficiency and effectiveness'. However, these three Es can be compounded

into a predominantly economic concern with 'efficiency'. This economic denotation of 'efficiency' and denigration of a broad criteria of 'effectiveness' has caused concern:

The idea that the criterion of efficiency can be applied to the provision of welfare services is anathema to many of those working in the area, as indeed for many of those involved in analysing it. For them, it appears to be, at best, an inappropriate application of a business concept to a field where some conception of social care or need, not commercial profit is the prime concern and, at worst, simply a disguise for cutting back welfare services. Yet there is nothing caring about wasting resources. And it is the avoidance of such waste that is the prime motivation behind the application of efficiency considerations in any area, including those that form the welfare state. However, it is important that the term be defined both clearly and in a way that displays sensitivity to the charge of inappropriateness. (Bartlett & LeGrand 1993:14).

As with the prospect of managerial reform, under NPM, there is the potential for improvement in the public sector, but concern about the precise manner and language being employed and the practical consequences.

The New Right, NPM, and the three Es, draw upon and develop a particularly economic and technical approach to the public sector. The discourse employed emphasises economic definitions of efficiency and effectiveness, rather than definitions relating to traditional values of education and governance. A new discourse has emerged since the late 1970s and this has become pervasive in policy and practice. However, the linkage between language, beliefs and behaviour is complex (Pollitt 1990), it is an empirical as well as a philosophical issue. While it appears that the language of the New Right, NPM and the three Es has become all pervasive, Tooley (1994) argues that in the resistance to reform is the continuing traditional 'discourse' and consensus of state provision. Furthermore, it is suggested that support for consensus, collectivism and partnership are stronger in Scotland rather than acceptance of competition, individualism and market forces (Arnott & Munn 1994, Deem 1994, McDowall 1994, Paterson 1997, Pignatelli 1994, Raab *et al* 1997), this links with the enduring discourse of 'Scottish myth' and 'partnership'. There is need to consider the

values explicit, the language promoted, the policies advocated, the perceptions of those involved and the practical consequences.

That the New Right and NPM have been influential in government policy post- 1979 does not suggest that no alternative theories and conceptions of reform exist. There is a general belief in the need to reform the public sector and a broad advocacy of 'decentralisation'. However, this is a general and neutral term. Decentralisation need not equate with markets and individualism, it can be advocated as a democratising device, emphasising community, collective responsibility, citizen participation and governance (Burns *et al* 1994, Hoggett & Hambleton 1997, Ranson & Stewart 1994). Local authorities may have the capacity to re- interpret decentralisation initiatives for differing purposes and principles (Leach 1996b).

In principle and especially practice, one is not going to encounter a pure market only. The promotion of 'management' suggests that some form of hierarchy may co- exist with market reforms. In the capacity for agency level resistance and re- interpretation, the possibility of networks emerging exists. Hence, the potential offered by developing the 'middle- theory' (Frances *et al* 1991) of the concepts and models of 'markets, hierarchies and networks' (Maidment & Thompson 1993, Thompson *et al* 1991, Raab 1994). All three exist in education and local government systems. For some critics, the fact that markets have not become supreme and that 'networks' of a cooperative, collaborative and collegial nature has emerged is a triumph (Macbeth *et al* 1995, Ranson & Tomlinson 1994). However, for others, the 'mix' of models is complicated and confused: "What is emerging is a new form of organisation that is neither market nor hierarchy, but which lies rather uncomfortably between the two" (Walsh 1995: xviii). The practical nature of these 'concepts' requires careful study. Furthermore, in concept and analyses, there is a need for greater consideration of what the defining and delimiting features of each are.

Recent reforms of education and local government have derived their ideological impetus from the promotion of markets and management as espoused by the New Right and NPM. In theory, criticisms can be made of the content and coherence of

these approaches. Language and discourse are crucial factors also in considering the nature and promotion of New Right and NPM ideals. The promotion of the three Es may, or perhaps more likely may not, be appropriate to the education and local government system. It is necessary to consider the nature of the concepts of economy, efficiency and effectiveness, plus to research how they are perceived by those involved and with what practical implications. In concept and practice, the models of hierarchy, market and network offer scope for development also, although they require criticism and caution. The values and ideals informing reform are vital considerations as these will pervade the nature of subsequent policy and aim to prescribe practice. However, the New Right provides a highly abstract 'theory', whereas the NPM is more empirically-based but assuming universal application. The extent to which either actually connects to 'reality' is contentious. In moving to practice, it is necessary to consider the perceptions and values of those involved, the nature of discourse and the apparent practical realities.

If ideals became reality and policy-making was discrete and top-down, one could assume that the education system would be characterised by markets and management in the 1990s. However, given the capacity for agency level reinterpretation and local variation, policy-making is reactive, reflective and sometimes resisted. Issues of governance, educational need, 'Partnership' and 'Scottishness' remains apparent in critiques of recent educational reform. There is the need to consider values, theories, perceptions and practices in order to understand the changing education system.

¹ British examples of New Right 'think tanks' include: Adam Smith Institute; Centre for Policy Studies; David Hume Institute; Hillgate Group; and Institute of Economic Affairs.

² The extent of linkage between the New Right and Thatcherism is not complete and remains contentious. The New Right does not equal Thatcherism, as the former can be traced to the 1960s and has an international dimension. Both schools of thought have been constrained in practice due to their internal nature and pragmatic factors. The extent to which Thatcherism selected specific New Right policies rather than being intrinsically derived from this school of thought requires greater research and clarification. See for example Arnott (1993), Brown & Sparks (1989), Gamble (1988), Jordan (1993) and Raab (1993).

³ As with public choice theory, Hayek emphasised the values of individualism and liberty. Friedman has a broader vision of 'freedom'. For public choice, Friedman and Hayek, the greatest liberty and freedom would emerge from a market system which did not presuppose equality of outcome. (See Ashford 1993).

⁴ Ashford (1993) and Green (1987) offer good expositions and comparisons of the key arguments of Friedman and the Chicago School, and those of Hayek and the Austrian School.

⁵ Heald (1983:83) discusses the state as having a “monopoly of legitimate violence”.

⁶ For example in Austria, periods of post-war Britain, Norway, Sweden and the former West Germany

⁷ Green (1987) provides a comprehensive exposition and critique of the differing strands of ‘liberalism’ contained within the New Right and their distinction and diversity from ‘conservatism’.

⁸ E.g. the Fulton Report 1968 on the civil service and the Layfield Commission on local government

⁹ Hood (1991a) provides the best starting point for a critique of NPM. Other definitions of NPM and associated changes exist (e.g. Ranson & Stewart 1994), though most are similar.

¹⁰ “Experience has converged in terms of 75- 85 per cent success for in-house tenders and 10- 20 per cent savings in cost.” (Parry 1992b: 17).

¹¹ The key developments were contained within *Working for Patients* in 1989 and legislated in 1990. General practitioners (GPs) have the capacity to become fund-holding. Hospitals can choose to ‘opt out’ of District Health Authority (DHA) and become self-governing hospital trusts. Contractual arrangements were envisaged throughout the NHS (National Association of Health Authorities 1989). A split between the purchasers (fund-holding GPs and DHAs) and the providers (hospitals-independent, trust status and DHA-managed) was created.

¹² *Efficiency and Effectiveness in the Civil Service*, specified implications for civil service departments:

- (a) a clear view of their objectives and means to assess and, wherever possible measures outputs and performance in relation to those objectives;
- (b) well-defined responsibility for making the best use of their resources, including a critical study of output and value for money; and
- (c) the information (particularly about costs), the training and the access to expert advice that managers need to exercise their responsibilities effectively. (Walsh 1995:167).

¹³ Operational ‘executive agencies’ would be separated from the strategic core and headed by a chief executive. A ‘framework document’ outlines the nature and purpose of each executive agency. Targets are set. Performance measurement and monitoring are integral. It was anticipated that executive agencies “may cover 75 per cent of Civil Service staff by 1998” (Parry 1992b:18).

¹⁴ The natures of these differing conceptions of ‘decentralisation’ have been explored by Burns *et al* 1994, Hambleton & Hoggett 1984, Hambleton *et al* 1989, Hoggett & Hambleton 1987.

¹⁵ These options demonstrate similarities to the ‘types’ of reform explored by Hambleton and colleagues (Hambleton *et al* 1989, Hoggett & Hambleton 1987, Burns *et al* 1994).

¹⁶ For example, networks between similar schools, such as rural schools for survival (Hargreaves 1996) or secondary schools for common development purposes (Husbands 1996, Monck & Husbands 1996, Upton 1996, West 1996). Alternatively, networks may exist between different types of schools, for example local primaries and secondary (Harbour 1996, Wallace 1996). Such networks may facilitate support and improvement at times of educational change (Gallagher 1995, Simkins *et al* 1992). There is the existence of networks with ‘external’ bodies also, for example parent-teacher partnerships (Bridges 1995, Macbeth 1995); networks with private businesses (Roberts 1994, Warwick 1995); with institutions of higher education (Barber & Johnson 1996, Leech 1995); and with local government (Husbands 1996, Ranson & Tomlinson 1994).

CHAPTER 8

METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES AND RESEARCH DESIGN

My research approach has been influenced by 'policy sociology' and the need to develop understanding of the nature, process, perception and practice of policy (Ozga 1987, Raab 1994a, b). Throughout issues of language, discourse and the "assumptive worlds" of those involved are integral (Raab 1994b: 23- 24). The research 'method' advocates the need for "careful historical work" and the "development of an education policy archive" (Ozga 1987: 146) which has been explored in the preceding chapters. Furthermore, consideration of the theoretical and conceptual issues underlying educational reform has demonstrated their frequently abstract nature and need to consider how these issues actually affect the fundamental nature of policy, plus associated discourse and importantly the practices at the 'ground- level'. In seeking to explore and understand 'new' policies, there is a need for detailed "empirical" work also, which tries to get "inside the policy process through participants accounts" (Raab 1994a:7). This is an inherently qualitative approach which favours the use of in- depth interviewing (Ozga 1987). All of these assumptions and approaches have influenced my research method. This chapter provides a general consideration of the benefits and weakness of adopting a qualitative or quantitative approach before a more detailed consideration of the 'technical' issues of my research method. The research method, sampling, conduct of research, collection of data and method of analyses are explained and justified.

Qualitative Research

Easterby- Smith *et al* (1991) suggest the appropriate research approach depends on the nature of the researcher, the research project and the research purpose. I am influenced by and advocating the use of a 'qualitative' research method for the study of education policy. There is ongoing debate about the relative merits and assumptions contained within qualitative approaches, associated with 'phenomenology', and quantitative approaches, associated with 'positivism' (Easterby- Smith *et al* 1991) and the 'pragmatic' mixing of approaches (Keeves 1988). Phenomenology and positivism are derived from differing philosophies, have differing epistemology and generally

advocate different methodologies (Devine 1995, Easterby- Smith *et al* 1991, Finch 1986). (See Table 8.1).

Table 8.1 Key features of positivist and phenomenological paradigms

	<i>Positivist paradigm</i>	<i>Phenomenological paradigm</i>
<i>Basic beliefs:</i>	The world is external and objective Observer is independent Science is value- free	The world is socially constructed and subjective Observer is part of what observed Science is driven by human interests
<i>Researcher should:</i>	focus on facts look for causality and fundamental laws reduce phenomena to simplest elements formulate hypotheses and test them	focus on meanings try to understand what is happening look at the totality of each situation develop ideas through induction from data
<i>Preferred methods include:</i>	operationalising concepts so that they can be measured taking large samples	using multiple methods to establish different views of phenomena small samples investigated in depth over time

(Source: Easterby- Smith *et al* 1991:27)

A general outline of the strengths and weaknesses associated with each approach is:

In the case of quantitative methods and the positivist paradigm, the main strengths are that: they can provide wide coverage of the range of situations; they can be fast and economical; and, particularly when statistics are aggregated from large samples, they may be of considerable relevance to policy decisions. On the debit side, these methods tend to be rather *inflexible* and artificial; *they are not very effective in understanding processes or the significance that people attach to actions; they are not very helpful in generating theories;* and because they focus on what is, or what has been recently, they make it hard for the policy- maker to infer what changes and actions should take place in the *future...*

The strengths and weaknesses of the phenomenological paradigm and associated qualitative methods are fairly complementary. *Thus they have strengths in their ability to look at change processes over time, to understand people's meanings, to adjust to new issues and ideas as they emerge, and to contribute to the evolution of new theories.* They also provide a way of gathering data which is seen as natural rather than artificial. There are , of

course, weaknesses. Data collection can take up a great deal of time and resources, and the analysis and interpretation of data may be very difficult. Qualitative studies often feel very untidy because it is harder to control their pace, progress and end- points. [my emphasis]. (Easterby- Smith *et al* 1991: 32).

I have added emphasis to indicate arguments which suggest and justify the use of qualitative methods for the particular nature of my research.

Historically, the 'dominant tradition' in 'policy research', especially in the social sciences, was a quantitative approach (Finch 1986). This was perceived as 'rigorous', 'objective' and 'useful' by government agencies and researchers (*ibid*). However, increasingly problems with quantitative methods for social and policy research have been identified (Finch 1986, Rist 1984). The 'dominant tradition' emphasised the use of survey research but there are severe limitations to this approach: it provides 'facts' but is limited in scope and potential to inform change; does not develop theories; "a lack of flexibility in the research process once it is set up"; data collection may be problematic and abstract from social settings; findings may be generalizable but focus on outcomes not processes or meanings (Finch 1986: 158-162). Rist (1984: 159) explains:

The hegemony of this approach has dissolved as researchers have come to realise that there are multiple routes and multiple destinations for their efforts. The causes of this recognition include the inability of the 'scientific' approach (1) reasonably to address many of the most pressing issues, for example in education...; (2) to respect the fluidity of change in social environments; and (3) to address the question of program processes instead of program outcomes... The limitations in the view that 'what cannot be measured cannot be important' have become apparent for all to see. The second of the changes... is that the conceptual vacuum created by the retreat of quantitative methods into an intellectual cul- de- sac has been filled by a growing and vigorous interest in qualitative methods.

The use of qualitative methods especially for understanding the process, perception and practice of policy is increasingly being advocated, developed and applied (Finch 1986, Halpin 1994, Halpin & Troyna 1994, Rist 1984).

Rist (1984:161) explains:

Asking the question, “what is going on here?” is at once disarmingly simple and incredibly complex. It is to the answer of this question that qualitative research addresses itself.

Qualitative research is perceived as ‘superior’ (Finch 1986) in studying policy: the study of ‘social life’ occurs in its ‘natural social setting’ and pays attention to the directly articulated experiences, meanings and diversity of those involved; hence, it reflects the “subjective reality” of interviewees, not ‘tests’ the objective ‘reality’ of the researcher’s questions (*ibid*: 167); qualitative methods are flexible and therefore can respond to issues and findings which emerge during the process of research; the research can inform change both within the object of study and the researching of the subject; meanings and understanding are utmost; finally, research is longitudinal and this facilitates study of processes, changes in setting and the development of ‘subjective’ meanings (Finch 1986, Rist 1984). For all of these reasons, qualitative research is perceived as appropriate to the study of policy, process and perception. However, there are ‘weaknesses’ with qualitative research (Easterby- Smith *et al* 1991, Finch 1986). In particular, its ‘generalisability’ and ‘validity’ are controversial (Finch 1986). The benefits of qualitative approaches for providing in- depth study and a focus on subjective meanings must be juxtaposed with the specificity of findings. Nevertheless, this does not mean that qualitative methods should be abandoned. Rather their nature should be made explicit and developed. Finch (1986) suggests a range of case studies should be used and that research findings should be explained and qualified in terms of their qualitative method and approach.

Finch (1986:227- 232) provides guidelines as to “a more highly developed policy-oriented qualitative research”:

(a) It is research which is technically competent, rigorously and professionally analyzed and interpreted

- (b) The research produced will be theoretically informed
- (c) Some development of methods is necessary, especially in the use of comparative cases
- (d) It will not necessarily serve the agenda of those in power and those who 'make' policy
- (e) It will tend to develop 'policy- oriented research' which is critical, challenging and oppositional, but not necessarily allied to a party- political position
- (f) It will have relatively modest aspirations for the impact of research, especially for its direct use
- (g) It will emphasize the indirect use and the 'enlightenment' role of research
- (h) It may well contain a specific commitment to the democratization of knowledge and the skills through which it is created
- (i) It will be concerned with policy at all levels, including grass- roots policy change
- (j) It implies researcher- involvement with policy as well as research.

The above criteria have informed my research design, method and approach. Although, it must be qualified that for criteria (j), I have not undertaken direct involvement such as in 'action research' , rather following the logic of qualitative epistemology recognise that as a researcher I am a social and political being and therefore cannot be totally objective but wish to display 'critical subjectivity' (Reason 1988) whereby one recognises one's assumptions but intends to maintain some detachment and capacity for judgement.

Research Method

There are a range of potential qualitative research methodologies (Easterby- Smith *et al* 1991, Keeves 1988). Following McPherson & Raab's (1988) 'policy sociology' of Scottish education policy- making, I have utilised analysis of primary and secondary documentation combined with in- depth interviewing. In developing this approach, I adopted a 'multiple site case study' (Deem & Brehony 1994).

i) Secondary Material

The extensive literatures reviewed have been informative in approaching my research. However, there is very limited published material concerning analysis of DSM and Reorganisation. Although from the 1980s onwards there has been increasing interest in Scottish education policy, there is relatively little published material. Given that the policies of decentralisation in both education and local government have practical application and theoretical import wider than Scotland, I have drawn upon non-Scottish material, especially from the wider British context. However, while this material has raised a range of possible issues, such as concepts of 'markets' and 'management', it must be treated with caution if one is to assume the potential for a 'Scottish dimension'. While the secondary material has proved informative and illuminating, it is sufficiently discrete from my own research project to require greater primary and exploratory investigation.

ii) Primary Documentation

My research has made substantial use of primary documentation. Government legislation, guidelines, circulars and statements have been drawn upon and analysed. These have been especially important in defining the nature, anticipated purpose and explicit values associated with the policies of DSM and Reorganisation and their 'policy texts' (Taylor *et al* 1997). The content in terms of language and policy has been systematically explored and critiqued. Issues arising from this material, e.g. in terms of practical implications, political objectives and conceptual issues, have been pursued in my fieldwork research.

Within my fieldwork, use of primary documentation from EA and school levels has been requested and analysed. Every EA provided me with documentation relating to DSM, e.g. the Scheme of Delegation, and Reorganisation, e.g. the Scheme of Decentralisation, plus additional material where relevant and possible, e.g. organisational structures and DSM support. Similarly, every school was asked to provide relevant documentation, e.g. budget statements and/ or the school development plan. This material was used to both inform the research conducted in

each school and EA and as a basis for comparison and development of the interview material collected.

iii) Interviews

The need to *talk* to policy-makers and practitioners in order to understand the process, practices and potential outcomes of policy has been stressed (Bartlett *et al* 1994, Ozga 1987, Raab 1994b). The need to research the 'assumptive worlds' of those involved, to explore the influence of 'agency', to search for meanings and to explore and analyse the importance and use of language have been advocated for studying education policy (McPherson & Raab 1988, Raab 1994b). Such approaches and assumptions indicate the use of interview method, the importance of talking with and listening to those involved (McPherson & Raab 1988, Ozga 1987).

Interviews become important also when there is a lack of adequate documentation available to explore the nature of policy, its process, related perceptions and practical implications. There is a dearth of material considering and critiquing DSM and Reorganisation, especially for the roles and relationships of schools and EAs. The primary documentation that exists consists of official pronouncements and tells one little of the actual process, perception and practice of these policies. Consequently, I have combined the use of documentation and interview, akin to McPherson & Raab (1988:56):

Primary and secondary sources informed our thinking, and often provided a first basis for many of the interview questions. In turn, what we learned from the interviews led us towards written sources to verify an account, or to extend our understanding. But the existing written accounts did not take us very far into the dialectic of belief and action. They did not cover many crucial events or perceptions, nor did they reveal motives. Moreover, we needed to interpret the documents themselves in the light of political processes in which they were generated, and this is not easy without access to the persons involved.

The interview is the "principal method of research" (*ibid*: 55), but it is informed by and juxtaposed with primary and secondary material also.

There are a range of potential 'types' of interview, from the highly structured and formal to the extremely open-ended and interactive (Powney & Watt 1987). I used semi-structured face-to-face interviewing, as advocated by Ozga (1987) for studying education policy. Being 'semi-structured' enabled issues identified from the primary and secondary material to be explored. It facilitated specific ideas or themes to be questioned. It enabled that core topics would be covered across all the interviews conducted, to enable comparison and a greater range of opinions to be explored. Topic guides were used for all interviews (see Appendix I). These contained a number of consistent issues but were varied also depending on the EA within which interviewing was occurring, the job remit of the person being interviewed, and at school-level questions related to the specific characteristics of the school were included also. Nevertheless, interviewees were encouraged to raise issues not included in the topic guide. Even for those issues from the topic guide, it depended on the interviewee's response, the amount of time and range of sub-themes explored concerning each issue. Topics were raised in an inquisitive and exploratory manner, not as directive or closed questions.

It was believed that 'face-to-face' interviewing would encourage a more open and honest account to be provided by interviewees. Out-with the constraints of a survey or unfamiliarity of a telephone interview, interviewees were free to, and frequently did, raise a number of issues on which they were not directly asked and ranged over a number of themes. This was essential to the exploratory and inductive nature of my research. It was intended to establish rapport between interviewee and interviewer in order to encourage greater depth and honesty of findings. Furthermore, being 'face-to-face' enabled me to 'research' more than the words spoken, e.g. the behaviour and setting of the respondent.

My approach to interviewing was typical of the 'classic' practice and purpose of 'in-depth' interviewing as outlined by Devine (1995:138):

In-depth interviewing is based on an interview guide, open-ended questions and informal probing to facilitate a discussion of issues in a semi-structured or unstructured manner... the interview guide is used as a checklist of topics to be

covered, although the order in which they are discussed is not pre-ordained (Bryman, 1988, p.66). Open - ended questions are used to allow the interviewee to talk at length on a topic. Finally, various forms of probing are used to ask the interviewee to elaborate on what s/he has said (Fielding, 1993, pp. 140- 141). Intensive interviews are, then, 'guided conversations' (Lofland and Lofland, 1984, p.59)... (which) allows people to talk freely and to offer their interpretation of events. It is *their* perspective that is paramount (Harvey, 1990). Qualitative methods are also appropriate in the study of processes. In-depth interviews allow people to tell their own story in language with which they are familiar. Where the discussion of issues flows naturally, it is possible to understand the logic of an interviewee's argument and the associative thinking that led them to particular conclusions. Finally, qualitative methods draw particular attention to contextual issues... Qualitative methods therefore capture meaning, process and context.

This is essentially the reason and the practice adopted in my research.

iv) Case Study Approach

Yin (1989) suggested the 'case study' approach is "a research strategy rather than a particular technique" (Deem & Brehony 1994:156). Case studies can be theoretically-informed and ethnographic or abstractly empiricist as indicated by existing research of LMS and 'management' in education (Bowe & Ball 1992, Ozga 1992). Case study approaches emphasise a detailed and in- depth focus which draws on a range of research to understand complex and evolving phenomena "within its real- life context" (Yin 1989:23). My use of a 'case study strategy' is to develop my in- depth interviewing from studying the transcripts of single interviewees to understanding the wider 'case study' of the EA within which they are located and the schools involved.

Case studies are predominantly small- scale and often single- site (Finch 1986). This has the benefit of facilitating in- depth and frequently longitudinal study, enabling study of processes as they emerge and progress and to gain greater understanding of the perceptions of those involved. However, as the research is focussed on one particular site, issues of reliability, representativeness, validity and generalisability

become acute (*ibid*). To ameliorate this, Finch (1986) suggests the development of 'comparative' case study approaches. However, her approach relies upon comparing 'new' case study research with previously conducted case studies. In the case of DSM and Reorganisation, this was impossible at the time of my research. Hence, a more appropriate method of extending the comparative nature of case study research is to conduct a 'multiple site case study' (Deem & Brehony 1994), involving multiple research sites, e.g. various schools and EAs. This retains a qualitative focus, but enables a cross-sectional as well as a longitudinal research focus. Multiple sources of information are utilised over a range of locations and time periods. This may increase validity and representativeness of findings (Deem & Brehony 1994, Finch 1986, McPherson & Raab 1988).

Deem & Brehony's (1994) use of a multiple site case study approach has some similarities to my own. They wished to study governing bodies at a time when there was a lack of existing research, therefore the research was exploratory and the subject area ill-defined. Although they had some theoretical issues in mind from previous literatures, they were interested in emergent theorisation throughout the research process. Hence:

these theoretical developments have been arrived at inductively, as a result of our immersion in our data, a process other qualitative researchers have also found useful (Hopkins, Bollington and Hewitt, 1989). (Deem & Brehony 1994: 161).

Although the study was predominantly qualitative, the range and comparable nature of data collected enabled some analysis in "quantitative ways, which allowed us to make case-study-wide generalizations about the sites and process we were studying" (*ibid*: 163). This enriches the study and improves validity. They acknowledge that such a research method and approach is controversial, but believe it to be worthwhile:

The longitudinal, multiple-site, case-study approach has proved to be a very fruitful one... we do not regret the mix of analytical induction and deduction which has characterized our theoretical approach. We could not have generated the amount and extent of our data or explanations had we felt confined to testing existing theory, constrained to examine our findings

through the lens of abstract theories... or obliged to conduct a large- scale survey. (*Ibid*:66).

In an exploratory study, the multiple- site case study has benefits.

These benefits and approaches merit attention in my research. My research does not 'test theories' through hypotheses or quantitative methods, however it is not purely a 'grounded' approach (Glaser & Strauss 1967, Easterby- Smith *et al* 1991), as issues from previous literatures have received attention. Similarly, in trying to uncover the crucial question of "What is going on here?" (Barton & Walker 1984:161), a qualitative approach is vital but one broader than a focus on a single school. Hence, the development of in- depth interviewing occurring within multiple sites. In this approach, some compromise between depth and breadth of findings may have been made, but overall greater understanding of the research subject is facilitated.

Research Sample

i) Selection of Interviewees

The research focuses on the policies of DSM and Reorganisation and how these affect the roles and relationships of schools and EAs. Many studies of education policy focus on the 'elite' at central level (Ozga & Gerwitz 1994). However, my focus was not as concerned with central government, but rather the 'local level' of school and EA. Although primary documentation, public statements, speeches and personal correspondence between myself and Scottish Office officials has been drawn upon, no interviewing occurred with central- level actors.

There is a lack of research concerning how education policy in Scotland is perceived, mediated and 'implemented' by the 'local officials' of Education Officer and Head Teacher. Hence, these individuals were to be my key interviewees. Other research concerning DSM has focussed on changes predominantly at school-level, including the school board (Adler *et al* 1994, 1996, 1997, Arnott & Bailey 1995, Arnott & Munn 1994, Arnott *et al*, 1993a, 1996, Raab *et al* 1997, Wilson *et al* 1995). Whereas I am concerned with the role of the school also but especially in relation to the EA.

Research has indicated the need to consider the changing relationship between head teacher and EA (Foreman 1989). I have focussed upon interviews with head teachers and DSM support staff at school-level. These interviewees were questioned about staff and school board perceptions and involvement, although such 'reporting' is 'second-hand' and sometimes anecdotal. At EA-level, a range of officers was interviewed who were involved in differing ways with the policies of DSM and Reorganisation. No politicians were interviewed, although officers were asked about the perception and action of political members, but while informative this information must be qualified. Interviewees were selected to give representative and detailed information about the impact of DSM and Reorganisation on the changing and potential roles and relationships of schools and EAs.

In selecting the above 'categories' of interviewees, certain categories have been excluded. Lay participants and politicians are not included, but this does not suggest that they are unimportant. Central government level has not been systematically researched. Due to issues of interest, access and research scope, I have focussed on the 'permanent, local officials' with responsibility for actually putting the policies of DSM and Reorganisation into practice. This defines and delimits the scope of my research. There are other issues and actors which could and indeed should be researched, but this is out- with the scope of the present study. Therefore, the focus of my study has been affected by personal choices and pragmatics of access and resources.

ii) Selection of Research Sites

The initial decision was to base my research around certain EAs and to involve a range of schools within each also. My sample is relatively large and varied in order to explore issues of comparison, diversity and commonality. Hence, the sample is 'purposive' rather than truly random, i.e. the sample was selected for specific reasons on established criteria. Had a larger research team been involved, a larger sample of sites and/ or interviews may have been included, however, the range selected was appropriate to the purpose and nature of my research.

a) The Sample of Regional Education Authorities (Pre- Reorganisation)

Starting with the then existing Regional councils forming EAs, I selected EAs which would provide a range of socio-economic, geographical, political and educational natures. I considered also the likely implications and differences of experience of the policies of DSM and Reorganisation. For the first policy, I considered what extent of experience of DSM there was within the Region. In terms of Reorganisation, I considered likely impacts, e.g. would the existing district councils be replicated, fragmented or amalgamated?. It was necessary to consider also the likely nature of the successor unitary councils, particularly where it was possible that a divergence of experience would emerge from what had occurred under Regional control, e.g. changed political control or financial implications. Such propositions and deductions were based on personal knowledge of the areas, official documentation, such as Scottish Office projections, and the considerable debate and propositions in various publications, e.g. SLGIU, TES (Scotland). The purpose of the sample sites selected was to gain a 'cross- section' of experience. Each research site is different in nature but being affected by essentially the same reforms. The aim being to consider the nature of these policies and the potential diversity and commonality of experience across settings, actors and time.

The first Regional EA selected was Strathclyde. Strathclyde was the largest Region in Scotland with a population of 2,306,000 (Scottish Office 1992b:104), plus a vast and diverse geographical and socio-economic nature. Strathclyde had the greatest experience of devolving school management given their introduction of DMR in 1990. By 1995, when my interviewing started, a large proportion of schools in Strathclyde operated DMR/ DSM. The Labour- controlled Strathclyde was strongly committed to devolving school management. As concerns Reorganisation, Strathclyde is an extreme example as the large Region was divided into 12 unitary councils. Hence, Strathclyde represents the extreme example of decentralisation under Reorganisation and the most extensive experience of the practice of DSM.

In sharp contrast, I selected Highland Region as my second site. The boundaries of Highland Regional Council remain largely intact post- reorganisation, although this involves the 'amalgamation' of the previous eight district councils and the development of schemes of decentralisation. There is potential change but perhaps not as extreme as Strathclyde. As concerns DSM., Highland had very limited experience by 1995. They had briefly 'piloted' a half- hearted scheme in two secondaries prior to national DSM, but the main impetus to reform was the Government policy. Their subsequent development of DSM was responsive to this and viewed as at 'pilot stages'. Highland is one of the smaller Regions in terms of population, 204,300 (Scottish Office 1992b: 104), although it has a large but predominantly rural geographical area. Highland is politically 'independent' in control.

Therefore, Strathclyde and Highland provide almost opposites of potential experience under both Reorganisation and DSM. In both respects they should be interesting research sites but may be atypical of the wider Scottish experience. Therefore, I selected the 'middle- ground' of experience in a third site of Grampian. In terms of Reorganisation, Grampian is fragmented into three single- tier councils, although this involves the amalgamation of five district councils. The twin- processes of amalgamation and fragmentation are evident. Grampian provides intermediate experience of DSM, by 1995 it was further into implementing DSM than Highland but not as far as Strathclyde. Grampian is the closest to 'average' in terms of its population, 506,000 compared to the average of 558,878 (Scottish Office 1992b:104). It is geographically smaller than the other two Regions but contains a mixture of urban, suburban and rural areas. It is politically 'mixed' also with support for Labour, Conservatives, Liberal Democrats and SNP strong within different parts of the Region. The three Regions selected represent a 'sliding- scale' of experience of DSM and Reorganisation from the extremity of Strathclyde through Grampian to Highland. Therefore, these sites were selected to represent potential differences in Reorganisation and DSM, although in a larger study further EAs could have been selected. It is possible that every EA in Scotland will develop in different ways, but this cannot be explored within the scope of my study.

Within the Regions, interviews were conducted with Education Officers who had involvement in DSM and/ or preparation for Reorganisation. Generally, the Officers interviewed were involved to varying degrees in both policies. Interviewing occurred between March to December 1995. In total, 12 Officers were interviewed across the three Regions. Anonymity was guaranteed, but table 8.2 outlines background information.

Table 8.2 Education Officers Interviewed in Regional EAs

Code	Education Authority	Senior Directorate	Career Background	Gender
GRCEO1	Grampian	No	Education	Male
GRCEO2	Grampian	Yes	Finance (Education)	Male
GRCEO3	Grampian	No	Education	Male
GRCEO4	Grampian	Yes	Education	Female
HRCEO1	Highland	Yes	Education	Male
HRCEO2	Highland	Yes	Finance (Education)	Male
HRCEO3	Highland	No	Finance/ Accountancy	Male
HRCEO4	Highland	No	Accountancy/ Clerical	Female
SRCEO1	Strathclyde	Yes	Education	Male
SRCEO2	Strathclyde	Yes	Education	Male
SRCEO3	Strathclyde	Yes	Finance/ Accountancy	Male
SRCEO4	Strathclyde	Yes	Education	Male

b) Selection of Schools

Within each EA, a sample of schools was selected to research school- level experience and opinion. I have chosen to research both primary and secondary sectors. All schools selected were non- denominational. The purpose was to focus on the 'mainstay' of schools as experienced by the bulk of pupils in Scotland. By selecting both primary and secondary sectors, similarities and differences of experience of DSM and Reorganisation can be considered as can the particular expectations for the role of the school, the role of the EA and the relationships between the two bodies.

Given the focus on DSM, it was necessary to choose the schools with the longest experience of DSM in each Region, these were the 'pilot schools'. Pilot schools may be different from those entering DSM later, but I believe these were the most appropriate research sites as they have the longest experience of a relatively new reform. The three EAs operated on a similar basis of introducing a small number of pilot secondaries along with their associated primaries. However, the number of secondaries was relatively small and the number of primaries relatively large, e.g. 6

and 27 respectively in Strathclyde. Therefore, for each secondary selected only one feeder primary was selected, as the purpose was to gain a cross-section of opinions across areas rather than the in-depth study of only one school cluster. Interviewing all primaries would have been problematic within the scale and resources of my research, but is a fruitful area for future research.

In Strathclyde, there were six pilot secondaries. Accordingly, these were selected along with six feeder primaries. One of the pilot secondaries refused access, therefore the total number of schools involved was eleven. These schools represented a range of scales, socio-economic circumstances and geographical locations. The six clusters of pilot schools would be located in six different EAs post-reorganisation. A similar situation existed in Grampian. Four different 'types' of secondary school formed the 'pilot sector', hence these were selected with four associated primaries. Post-reorganisation, these schools would be located in two different EAs. In Highland, the situation was different as the DSM pilot operated on the basis of one district council area, six secondaries and associated primaries were involved. Although there were differences in scale and location of school, the 'setting' of the schools was closely related and post-reorganisation all schools would remain within the same EA. Hence, in Highland it was decided to select only three pilot secondaries and three associated primaries to represent the experience of a small, medium and large sized school (determined by pupil numbers). In all EAs, the criteria for selection of primary schools was pupil roll, to research a range school scales.

A total of 25 schools were included as research sites. I requested that each school selected completed a 'profile of school' form (see Appendix J) which provided additional information relating to the school, e.g. existence of school board and stability of school roll, and concerning the head teacher, e.g. gender and tenure. This provides additional 'variables' which may influence the fieldwork findings. In all schools, I requested interviews with the head teacher and the person in-school responsible for providing DSM support. In the majority of schools, the head teacher agreed to be interviewed but did not give me the opportunity to interview the DSM assistant. Generally, the matter was ignored by the head teacher rather than directly

rejected. One can infer various reasons for this, perhaps the head teachers wanted to maintain that they were in charge and had greatest knowledge of DSM and their school, perhaps it suggests that head teachers are still predominantly authoritarian in their outlook rather than participative. There were exceptions: in SRCSS1 and SRCPS1 the head teachers met me along with their DSM support person. In these cases, there was an appearance of being 'colleagues', although the head teacher retained authority. In HRCPS2, the head teacher invited his DSM support to be present because he was unconfident about talking in detail about DSM. Similar happened in SRCSS5 post- reorganisation as an acting head teacher was in post and did not feel fully equipped to talk about DSM. By contrast, in GRCSS3 post-reorganisation, due to an emergency meeting, the head teacher was unable to meet with me and his DSM support person was interviewed instead. In all cases, the DSM support people had clerical backgrounds and were female. In all the schools which had involved their DSM support person in the pre- Reorganisation interviews, they did not do so in the follow- up interview. Various reasons can be posited: the head teachers' increased confidence in DSM; the head teachers' more informal and relaxed attitude towards myself; or the head teachers' belief in their authority and primacy.

Table 8.3 Schools and Head Teachers Involved in Fieldwork Research

School	Education Authority	Scale of School (No. Pupils)	Geographical location	Socio-economic location	Gender of HT	Tenure of HT	School Board
GRCSS 1	Grampian/City of Aberdeen	Medium (820) Rising	Urban	Mixed	M	2-6 years (5 years)	Yes
GRCSS 2*	Grampian/Aberdeenshire	Large (1652) Stable	Rural	Mixed	M	7 - 17 years (14 years)	Yes
GRCSS 3	Grampian/Aberdeenshire	Large (1601) Stable	Urban	Mixed	M	2- 6 years (4.5 years)	Yes
GRCSS 4	Grampian/Aberdeenshire	Small (455) Rising	Rural	Mixed	M	2-6 years (2.5 years)	Yes
HRCSS 1	Highland/Highland	Small (426) Stable	Urban/Rural Mix	Deprived	M	7-17 year (10 years)	No

HRCSS 2	Highland/ Highland	Medium (654) Stable	Rural	Deprived	M	2-6 years (3 years)	Yes
HRCSS 3#	Highland/ Highland	Large (1190) Stable	Rural	Deprived	M	Over 17 years (18.5 years)	No
SRCSS1	Strathclyde/ North Lanarkshire	Medium (650) Falling	New Town (Urban)	Mixed	M	2-6 years (2.5 years)	Yes
SRCSS2	Strathclyde/ South Lanarkshire	Large (1025) Rising	Urban	Mixed	M	7-17 years (10.5 years)	Yes
SRCSS3 #	Strathclyde/ South Ayrshire	Medium (632) Stable	Rural	Mixed	M	2-6 years (5 years 8 months)	Yes
SRCSS4	Strathclyde/ Argyll & Bute	Small (490) Stable	Rural	Mixed	M	7-17 years (13 years)	Yes
SRCSS5 *	Strathclyde/ City of Glasgow	Small (420) Falling	Urban	Deprived	M	Over 17 years (19 years)	Yes
GRCPS 1	Grampian/ City of Aberdeen	Small (165) Falling	Urban	Mixed	F	2-6 years (4 years)	No
GRCPS 2#	Grampian/ Aberdeenshire	Small (6) Falling	Rural	Mixed	F	Over 17 years (23.5 years)	No
GRCPS 3	Grampian/ Aberdeenshire	Large (456) Stable	Town school (Urban)	Affluent	M	Less than 2 years (1.5 years)	Yes
GRCPS 4	Grampian/ Aberdeenshire	Medium (312) Rising	Rural	Mixed	F	2-6 years (5 years)	Yes
HRCPS 1	Highland/ Highland	Small (170) Falling	Rural	Mixed	F	2-6 years (5 years)	Yes
HRCPS 2	Highland/ Highland	Medium (240) Stable	Rural	Deprived	M	2-6 years (5 years)	No
HRCPS 3	Highland/ Highland	Large (497) Falling	County Town (Rural)	Mixed	M	7-17 years (12 years)	Yes

SRCPS1	Strathclyde/ North Lanarkshire	Medium (210) Falling	Urban New Town	Mixed	F	2-6 years (3 years)	No
SRCPS2	Strathclyde/ South Lanarkshire	Large (590) Stable	Urban	Mixed	F	2- 6 years (5 1/2 years)	Yes
SRCPS3 #	Strathclyde/ South Ayrshire	Small (35) Stable	Rural	Mixed	F	7-17 years (7 years)	Yes
SRCPS4 *	Strathclyde/ Argyll & Bute	Large (442) Rising	Rural	Mixed	F	2-6 years (4 years)	Yes
SRCPS5	Strathclyde/ City of Glasgow	Small (105) Falling	Urban	Deprived	F	2-6 years (3 years)	Yes
SRCPS6	Strathclyde / East Renfrewshire	Medium (340) Stable	Suburban/ Rural	Mixed	F	7-17 years (9 years)	Yes

* In these schools the head teacher changed between the 1st and 2nd phases of my fieldwork:

In SRCPS2 and SRCPS5, the head teacher whom I had spoke to in phase 1 had retired by phase 2. In phase 2, I spoke to the newly appointed Ht in SRCPS2 and the Acting HT in SRCPS5. In SRCPS4, I had spoken to the Acting HT in phase 1 as the 'permanent' HT had been on various sabbaticals from the school amounting to almost 4 years continuously. By phase 2, the permanent HT had returned to SRCPS4 and was interviewed (this alters the gender balance in phase 2, SRCPS4's HT was male but female in phase 1).

These schools were not re-interviewed post- reorganisation:

SRCPS2 was closed in the intervening period (the closure was uncontroversial). South Ayrshire did not grant me permission to conduct research, therefore SRCPS3 and SRCPS3 were excluded. In SRCPS3, the HT was 'unavailable' for interviewing.

Two phases of interviewing were conducted at school- level. The first phase occurred following the Regional EA interviews but prior to Reorganisation, between January to March 1996. The second phase began over six months after Reorganisation during late November 1996 until the end of January 1997¹. For the second phase, interviews with the new EA-level preceded the interviews at school-level. Hence, the various levels and stages of interviewing informed each other. Furthermore, alongside 'formal' interviewing at school-level, I used my time in each school to observe its nature to have 'informal' chats with clerical assistants and teachers when possible. The nature of each school and its head teacher are outlined in Table 8.3. Some categorisations are relative, e.g. a school is 'small' or 'large' in terms of the range within my sample rather than objective criteria². Most of the information is based on head teacher's self- reporting.

c) Education Authorities Post- Reorganisation

Having determined the initial sample due to the nature of the Regional EA, pilot DSM schools were selected within each EA also. With the disappearance of the Region, these schools were researched through the process of both implementing DSM and being affected by Reorganisation. Consequently, it was the location of these schools that determined which 'new' EAs would become research sites post- reorganisation. Nine EAs were to be involved. However, South Ayrshire did not respond to my request for access, hence this EA and its associated schools (SRCSS3 & SRCPS3) had to be dropped from my research post- reorganisation. This was unfortunate, but I believe that a sample of eight EAs is sufficiently large to explore the issues pertinent to my research. Furthermore, these eight EAs were characterised by different political control and scale of educational provision, i.e. number of schools, as well as the geographical and socio-economic diversity displayed in the school research sites (see Table 8.4).

Table 8.4 Education Authorities Selected Post- Reorganisation

Authority	No. Of Primary Schools	No. Of Secondary Schools	Political Control
<i>National Average</i>	<i>077.1</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>N/A</i>
City of Glasgow	209 (> average, largest in Scotland)	40 (> average, largest in Scotland)	Labour
Highland	199 (> average)	27 (> average)	Independent
North Lanarkshire	126 (> average)	25 (> average)	Labour
South Lanarkshire	127 (> average)	22 (> average)	Labour
Aberdeenshire	162 (> average)	16 (> average)	Independent/ Liberal
City of Aberdeen	62 (< average)	13 (= average)	Labour
Argyll & Bute	85 (> average)	10 (< average)	Independent
East Renfrewshire	20 (< average, smallest in Scotland)	7 (< average)	Liberal/ Labour

[The figures on school numbers are based on S.O.E.D. figures (September 1993). Political control is determined by the results of elections held for the 'shadow' councils in 1995].

In each of the EAs, interviews were conducted with Education Officers involved with DSM and/ or the development of the nature of the EA and its policies post-Reorganisation. A total of 17 Officers were interviewed between November 1996 and January 1997. Of these, four officers had been involved in the first phase of my fieldwork (AEO2, HEO1, HEO2 and HEO3), although they were now being questioned about the new EA. The fact that all the Highland Education Officers

interviewed post- reorganisation had been interviewed prior to reorganisation in essentially the same job role may illustrate that less change had occurred in Highland. All of the interviewees had previously been involved in the Scottish education system with local government responsibilities. The two interviewees who had not worked directly in the predecessor EA to their current EA, had worked as EOs in other Scottish Regions. Therefore, despite potentially radical structural change, at the 'agency' level there remains some continuity.

Table 8.5 Education Officers Interviewed Post- Reorganisation

Code	Education Authority	Worked for Preceding EA?	Previous Position	Now Senior Directorate	Career Background	Gender
AEO1	Aberdeenshire	Yes	Divisional EO	Yes	Education	Male
AEO2	Aberdeenshire	Yes	Regional EO	Yes	Finance/ Education	Male
A&BEO1	Argyll & Bute	Yes	AFO (DSM Support)	No	Clerical/ Finance (Education)	Male
A&BEO2	Argyll & Bute	Yes	Divisional EO	Yes	Education	Male
COAEO1	City of Aberdeen	Yes	Divisional EO	Yes	Education	Male
COAEO2	City of Aberdeen	Yes	Regional EO	Yes	Education/ finance	Male
COGEO1	City of Glasgow	Yes	Divisional EO	Yes	Education	Male
COGEO2	City of Glasgow	Yes	Divisional EO	Yes	Education	Male
EREO1	East Renfrewshire	Yes	AFO (DSM Support)	No	Clerical/ Finance (Education)	Male
EREO2	East Renfrewshire	Yes	Divisional EO	Yes	Education	Male
EREO3	East Renfrewshire	No	Regional EO	Yes	Education	Female
HEO1	Highland	Yes	Regional EO	Yes	Education	Male
HEO2	Highland	Yes	Regional EO	No	Finance/ Accounts	Male
HEO3	Highland	Yes	DSM Support	No	Clerical/ Accounts	Female
NLEO1	North Lanarkshire	Yes	Divisional EO	Yes	Education	Male
SLEO1	South Lanarkshire	No	Regional EO	Yes	Education	Female
SLEO2	South Lanarkshire	Yes	DSM Support	No	Clerical/ finance	Female

Gaining Access

My research sites involved three Regional EAs, with interviews with 12 Officers, 25 schools, with interviews with all head teachers in the first phase and most in the second phase, and 8 successor EAs, with 17 Officers being interviewed. Only one school and one 'new' EA did not grant access. Given the criteria of my sample selection, this school and EA could not be replaced and were therefore disregarded. I believe this to be an extremely good rate of response and am grateful for the extent of access granted.

The issue of access was approached and gained in a generally formal manner. Firstly, I wrote to the relevant Directors of Education outlining the nature of my research and the types of access required. Their co-operation was requested. My supervisor provided a covering letter stressing the importance of my research and assuring its propriety and legitimacy. From these initial letters, access gradually became granted. In Highland and Strathclyde, the Directors granted access and approval to research at EA and school levels. Subsequently, interviews with education officers were negotiated and granted via further letters and telephone calls. In Grampian, the Director did not reply to my initial or two further letters. As a final attempt to gain access, a member of my University Department who had provided consultancy and training for Grampian's education service contacted officers on my behalf. Consequently, an education officer involved with DSM offered to meet with me and persuaded two further officers to become involved. Having secured the co-operation of three officers, I wrote back to the Director suggesting that 'formal' involvement of Grampian Education may be mutually beneficial. Agreement was reached and co-operation secured. Hence, the spread of initial interviewing at Regional level over 10 months indicates the time involved in negotiating access, arranging availability and conducting interviews with 12 officers in three EAs. Subsequently, the schools were approached. I sent a formal letter outlining the nature of my research, indicating the level of access required and the fact that the EA had agreed involvement. In all but one case, access was granted. A mixture of letters and telephone calls were used to arrange meeting times and to re-assure potential interviewees about the nature of my research. In approaching the post-reorganisation EAs, there was a concern that given

the enormity of change and pressures on the education officers, access may be more problematic. Consequently, my supervisor made initial contact via a formal letter outlining the nature of my research, stressing the necessity to trace developments post-reorganisation and indicating the extent of co-operation attained pre-reorganisation. Access was granted in all but one case.

There are several possibilities as to why access was granted relatively easily. Firstly, in studying education, one is approaching interviewees who are generally sympathetic to the conducting of research and expansion of education. Secondly, in my letter of introduction I made my research appear relatively straightforward, considering DSM and Reorganisation in practice, and requiring a minimal amount of time on behalf of each interviewee. The use of a 'simplistic' outline of my research was two-fold: firstly, to avoid 'scaring off' potential interviewees confronted with some grand theoretical enquiry; and secondly, given the exploratory nature of my study, to avoid 'biasing' responses and guiding interviewee perceptions. Also, depending on to whom the letter was addressed the emphasis of my research was altered slightly to suggest that their involvement would be important and that I would be sympathetic (Ozga & Gerwitz 1994). Powney & Watt (1987) suggested 'academic' research is perceived as less threatening and perhaps research conducted by a student is even less threatening. Although the timing of my research could have been problematic with the speed of change and pressure preventing people from participating, it appears fortuitous as many interviewees were keen to 'have their say' and traditional loyalties were eroding. Finally, all correspondence was made through my university address and use of Departmental notepaper. This influenced involvement and gave legitimacy. The Department is well respected and many of the interviewees either knew or knew of people from my Department. Consequently, they were re-assured that my work would be handled properly. For a number of reasons relating to the content and conduct of my research, access was generally granted.

Conducting the Interviews

i) Timing

The timing of the 'phases' of my research was determined by my research design, by the availability of access and fundamentally by the timing of policy reform (see Tables 8.6 and 8.7). Setting time limits on qualitative research can be problematic (Easterby-Smith *et al* 1991). However, the time-scale was appropriate to the scale and focus of my research, e.g. introduction of DSM, developments pre and post Reorganisation.

Table 8.6 Timing of DSM and Local Government Reorganisation Policies

Timetable	DSM	Reorganisation
<i>1 April 1994</i>	1 st Tranche of Schools Operating DSM	
<i>6 April 1995</i>		Election of 'Shadow' Councils
<i>1 April 1996</i>	DSM in all Primary (except very small) & Secondary Schools	New Councils Assume Full Powers
<i>1 April 1997</i>	DSM in all special school	Councils to have produced 'Schemes of Decentralisation'
<i>1 April 1998</i>	DSM. in remaining primaries	

Table 8.7 My Research Timetable

Interviews	Timing
<i>Regional EAs</i>	March- Dec. 1995
<i>Schools (pre- reorganisation)</i>	Jan- March 1996
<i>EAs post- reorganisation</i>	Nov 1996- Jan 1997
<i>Schools post- reorganisation</i>	Nov 1996- March 1997

ii) The Interview Setting

All interviews occurred within the EA or school being researched, generally in the office of the person being interviewed. This was considered to be appropriate for several reasons: it caused minimal disruption to the interviewee on whom I was heavily reliant for co- operation and patience; it placed the interviewee in their 'natural setting' and therefore possibly made them more relaxed; and it gave me an opportunity to observe the interviewee in that setting, giving me a 'feel' for the nature

of the person and the EA or school. It gave me also the opportunity to have 'informal' contact with a wider range of people than the 'official interviewee'. The key drawback of going to the interviewee was the substantial amount of travelling involved. Qualitative research is notoriously time-consuming and both the wide geographical spread of my research sites and the use of face-to-face interviewing required a lot of time and commitment on my part. However, it was worthwhile. The research on DSM that has recently been published is restricted to a limited number of research sites in Tayside, Lothian and Strathclyde (Adler *et al* 1996, 1997, Raab *et al* 1997, Wilson *et al* 1995). The research in Strathclyde was based on four secondary schools located in suburban/urban areas. While my research also contains such schools, it has the added element of rural schools and primaries. These features characterise my research in Grampian and Highland Regions also which have not previously been researched concerning DSM. My research post-reorganisation continues this originality. Researching schools which are 'close at hand' has certain logistical advantages, however it reinforces a 'central belt' focus which ignores rural schools and the heterogeneity of Scotland. If one is to pursue issues of commonality and diversity a range of different research sites are necessary. If the influence of agency and issues of perception and language are to be taken seriously, face-to-face qualitative interviewing is necessary. The extent of this task should not be underestimated, but it was worthwhile.

iii)The Interview Process

Interviewing was generally one-to-one, however on some occasions more than one interviewee was involved at the same time. Some head teachers met me with their DSM support person present. Pre-reorganisation, GRCEO1, GRCEO2 and GRCEO3 were interviewed as a group. In Highland, HRCEO2 and HRCEO3 were interviewed as a pair, as was HRCEO3 with HRCEO4, furthermore HRCEO3 was interviewed separately also. Post-reorganisation, AEO1 and AEO2 were interviewed together. Similarly, COAEO1 and COAEO2 were interviewed as a pair, although COAEO2 spoke to me alone also. In East Renfrewshire, I spent almost one hour alone with EREO1 before EREO2 joined us for nearly an additional hour. These arrangements were established by the interviewees and reflected the availability of people, time and

in some cases an attempt to give me a 'fuller picture'. There are benefits and problems with both one person interviews and group interviews. At its best, as in Grampian, the presence of more than one person triggers issues and raises debate and conflicting opinions. At its worst, as in City of Aberdeen, there was the impression that the two Officers severely disagreed but were trying to conceal information from each other and therefore me. I believe that as my research entails a fortuitous combination of 1, 2 and 3 person interviews, I have overcome the weaknesses of each by providing a different range of 'interviews' which offer a thorough consideration of the issues in my research, through comparative, complimentary and conflicting views.

All interviews were conducted in essentially the same manner. Generally I arrived for the interview and reported to a reception, from where I was greeted by the interviewee. Once in the 'interview setting', I introduced the nature of my research focussing on DSM, Reorganisation and the roles of schools and EAs. If clarification was sought by the interviewee this was dealt with at the outset. I carried a 'topic guide' to all interviews, however this was used unobtrusively as a check- list rather than as a pre- set list of questions. From the outset, I stressed that I was interested in the interviewee's personal opinions and experiences and that the 'interview' was more like a conversation than a question and answer session. Generally, the actual 'interview' was initiated by my asking a broad question about what the education system had been like pre- DSM and how DSM had affected this. Sometimes the interviewee started talking without prompting. Most interviewees talked widely and relatively freely, covering most of the issues on my 'topic guide' without prompting and many more also. Where prompting was necessary or questioning, I tried not to bias the response by using a 'neutral' prompt such as 'can you explain a little bit more?', 'can you give me an example?', or a direct question, 'would you consider opting out?'. The same types of questions and prompts were used in all the interviews although their precise nature varied depending on the issue being discussed. Although I have used the terms 'discussion' and 'conversation', these were conducted on a very 'one- sided' basis where the interviewee's opinion was sought and I refrained from offering my personal opinion so as to encourage the interviewee to be honest and explanatory. Towards the end of every interview, I asked the interviewee if they

wished to raise any issues that had not yet been covered, if they wanted to add to any earlier comments and if they had any final comments. At the end of each interview, I thanked the interviewee. The interviews varied in length. I requested around one hour. Most interviews fell within this range, from 45 minutes to 1 hour 30 minutes. However, some interviews ranged from less than 30 minutes to almost four hours.

Much has been written about the interaction between interviewer and interviewee (Ozga & Gerwitz 1994, Powney & Watts 1987), however this is difficult to assess when one is involved. I dressed formally to the interviews in order to give the impression of 'formality' and respect, but was friendly towards the interviewee. All the interviewees were friendly, polite, pleasant and helpful. Prior to the interview, the interviewees knew me to be a doctoral student and associated me with official university stationery and formal letters. I believe this gave me credibility and respect. However, on actually meeting me, some interviewees commented on my youth and I think this contributed to many of the interviews being relatively informal and the interviewee striving to explain everything. I think that this combination was fruitful as I was given relevant and detailed information. However, as with all single researcher qualitative studies, it is possible that different researchers would have different experiences and information.

iv) Recording Information

The purpose of the interview is to gather information, therefore it is necessary to have some method of recording that information for later use and analysis. There are 'trade-offs' between the different methods available for recording interviews (Powney & Watts 1987). As I was keen to capture the depth, detail, diversity, language and "subjective reality" (Finch 1986:187) displayed in each interview, I decided that tape recording would be the most appropriate method, as it avoids the abbreviated information of notes or memory, yet is not as obtrusive as video-recording. The problem is that tape-recording may inhibit or restrict what the interviewee is prepared to say and make them ill at ease. I used several methods to try to overcome these limitations. Confidentiality was assured. The tapes would be kept safe and would not be marked with the interviewee's name, only a code. No information would be

directly attributed. The process of actual recording was made as unobtrusive as possible, a small tape recorder was placed inconspicuously. The interviewee was assured that if they wanted to switch off the tape recorder personally or by me, this was absolutely acceptable and understood. These practices were intended to ensure the acceptability and adequacy of tape- recording the interview.

All interviewees were asked if they would permit the interview to be recorded before the actual 'interview' began. The majority was agreeable. In the fieldwork pre-reorganisations, all EA- level interviews were tape recorded. However, of the 25 schools, five refused, these were all primaries. There may be an issue about how the different sectors deal with researchers and more generally public discussion and voicing opinions. For these schools it was instantly agreed that the meeting would not be recorded and that this was not a problem, in order to maintain co-operation. It was better to get a relatively 'open', but unrecorded meeting than to force tape- recording resulting in either the cancelling of the interview or restricted information. In these cases, notes were taken during the meeting and expanded on as soon as possible afterwards. Post- reorganisation, only one school refused to be tape- recorded plus one officer. That four schools changed their opinion suggests perhaps greater trust had been established by our second meeting and that there was a recognition that confidentiality had not been broken. Indeed, a reason why I decided not to disseminate 'interim findings' was to re- assure interviewees that their confidence would be respected and to avoid 'biasing' subsequent meetings.

In general, I believe that tape- recording was effective. Interviewees tended to talk at length and with reasonable 'openness'. Some education officers in particular tended to adopt 'public servant speak' and there is the issue of how close to the truth one can ever come (Sayer 1992). Most people seemed unperturbed by the tape recorder. On some occasions, interviewees would stop and say 'this is off the record', 'you won't sell this to the papers', or 'don't tell my employer but...', allowing recording to continue once assurances had been made. This suggests that there was some awareness of the tape- recorder but a preparedness to be relatively frank. On three occasions, head teachers made some very direct and critical comments after the tape-

recorder had been switched off and the interview was 'technically' finished. This suggests that the tape-recorder may have inhibited some comment, although these interviewees were explanatory and critical on-record also. The benefit of the tape-recorder was the creation of a detailed and accurate record of the large number of interviews conducted.

iv) Transcribing the Interview Material

Detailed and lengthy transcripts of every interview that was tape recorded were made. Where irrelevant comments are recorded these have been edited out of the transcripts. Transcribing the interviews was a time-consuming exercise, however it provided tremendous familiarity with my material. It enables ease of later analyses and comparison within and between interviews. By transcribing the interviews personally, I avoided any potential breaches of confidentiality. For those interviews that were not tape-recorded, 'transcripts' were made also. These are not as detailed nor lengthy, but they enable analyses, information and comparison. All transcribing was done as soon as possible after the interview when the information and issues were still prominent in my recollection.

Analysing the Research Material

Having completed interviews and transcripts, the next stage was the complex task of how to analyse the material. Computer packages are available which code and interpret qualitative information, however as Easterby-Smith *et al* (1991:113) comment:

we are sceptical of many of the computer packages available for qualitative research; and there is no package that can substitute for the interpretative skills of the researcher.

They continue to argue that computer packages may emphasise issues of frequency rather than understanding and meaning. There are practical and resource problems in accessing adequate computer facilities and packages also. I chose to order, code and analyse my findings manually. My interviews are characterised by a depth, detail and diversity which would be difficult to capture within simple 'key word' categorisations. Furthermore, the process of manually sorting and considering my

material has made it more familiar and developed my understanding of the issues for consideration (Powney & Watts 1986). Analysis centred mainly on the 'content' of the interviews both in isolation and in juxtaposition (Powney & Watts 1987). The content was considered in terms of the practical 'facts' described, the perceptions expressed and the language used. For the last issue, I have suggested throughout that language may be an interesting factor, hence the necessity of qualitative interviewing. Language is treated as both 'content', what is said, e.g. the use of 'managerial' rhetoric (Bridges & McLaughlin 1994, Burns *et al* 1994, Hood 1991a, b), and as process creating a pervasive discourse across interviewees, e.g. do schools reiterate the emphasis of central and / or local government rhetoric?. It is acknowledged that objective 'facts' are virtually non-existent (Sayer 1992), but that some 'factual evidence' can be considered, e.g. a school's budget is £2 million. But that in considering this further, we need to consider the subjective perception of this 'fact', £2 million is ample therefore the head teacher has increased managerial freedom or £2 million is insufficient creating constraint and cost-cutting. Therefore, the combined analysis of practical factors, perceptions and language in order to attach meaning to the statements and understand the research. Consideration of 'discourse' requires attention to textual and verbal communication, plus the discursive strategies adopted linked to key word, 'signifiers' and attached meanings (Poulson 1996).

In scrutinising and analysing the data, various stages have been adopted. Firstly, the interviews were listened to, then transcribed and then re-read. In this process I began to discern emerging themes and issues. The content of each interview was considered both as a whole and as a series of topics. 'Topic codes' were inferred and quotes relevant from all the interviews were collated under these headings. A range of topics referring to issues of policy, practice, process and perception emerged. Many 'topic codes' contained sub-topics also, e.g. 'Benefits of DSM' contained improved school management. Some issues were inter-related, e.g. improved school management linked to the view that the head teacher was becoming a manager. By considering the entirety and the detail of each interview, themes and analyses began to emerge.

Given the nature of my research as exploratory but informed by issues arising from the approaches of 'policy sociology' which stresses the process and perception of policy and the interaction of agency, analyses of the interviews has ranged from straight-forward consideration of 'what was said?' to deeper analysis of 'what is going on?'. This is reflected in the presentation of research findings. Chapter Nine provides a report of my research findings - what was said, in what manner and by whom, focussing on the policies of DSM and Reorganisation, the role of schools and EAs, plus their relationships. The aim is to provide an overview of the issues that emerged and findings that resulted from my study. To establish the 'facts' of my findings as it were and to allow the reader to interrogate these. As Spradley (1979:1) commented: "Before you impose your theories on the people you study, find out how those people define the world.". Hastings (1998) argues research should be presented in a manner which enables the reader to understand and explore how the researchers findings emerged. In seeking to understand further these findings and their importance, Chapter 10 is more analytical. This chapter explores further the nature of the findings, influenced by issues from the existing secondary and primary material and juxtaposing my findings with previous assumptions and theorisation. The aim is to present findings, to analyse them and to seek to understand.

Critique of the Research Process

As with all qualitative research, issues of generalisability, validity, bias, accuracy and approach can be criticised against my research method. These problems can never be fully overcome, but can be addressed through explanation and qualification. I have explained in detail the assumptions, methods, techniques and procedures underpinning my research. These 'shape' the nature of research conducted and type of findings explored, the intention never was to produce experimental design, statistical verification or objective truths.

Interviews are "social interaction" (Powney & Watts 1987:15) and the potential for bias in the approach of both the interviewee and the interviewer is present. Both select to 'present' themselves in a certain manner (McPherson & Raab 1988, Ozga & Gerwitz 1994). I was the interested and enthusiastic researcher who was sympathetic

to my respondent to encourage openness and honesty. They were the 'imparters' of knowledge, perhaps as an extended vision of a public service ethic, perhaps to air their gripes, perhaps to present themselves as 'managers' to a student from the Department of Human Resource Management, or to bemoan their changing status to a sympathetic ear. This is possible, it was never assumed that universal truth and objective fact would be established. It was the presentation and perception of these 'truths' that were interesting.

In exploring the presentation and perception of 'truth' and the 'construction' of reality, analysis of discourse has been advocated (Ball 1990, 1993, 1994, Gunnarsson *et al* 1997, Hastings 1998, Mair 1998, Poulson 1996). 'Discourse' is argued to provide a means to link theoretical and empirical enquiries, to 'bridge' the micro and macro (Hastings 1998, Poulson 1996). However, such a task is methodologically complex (Poulson 1996). Discourses are characterised by 'presences' and 'absences', by explicit and implicit assumptions, by coherence and contradictions (Mair 1998). Such attributes suggest analysis of discourse is not straight - forward. It can be problematic to discern what the 'absences' are and with what significance. Therefore analysis of discourse can be influenced by the researcher's interpretation of the 'meaning' conveyed. While consideration of discourse is a fruitful means for exploring qualitative data, its use must be clarified and ongoing developments are necessary (Hastings 1998, Poulson 1996).

However, this does not mean that consideration of 'discourse' is futile and invalid. Textual, verbal and 'observable' discourses provide keys to understanding the assumptions and perceptions of those being interviewed (Mair 1998, Raab 1994a) and the meanings they attach to policy. While a researcher can never fully understand the thoughts of interviewees, discourse aids understanding. Discourse is a social and interactive process, it is the meanings conveyed that are crucial (Gunnarsson *et al* 1997, MacDonnell 1986, Mair 1998, Mill 1997). My research focuses on the 'dominant discourses' associated with education and local government policy, such discourses have a collective dimension which facilitates better shared meaning and understanding (Howarth 1995). Where contradictions and 'dis-identification' appear

relating to the 'dominant discourse', these are interesting for indicating where conflict arises. Differences in terminology and sometimes meaning exist within discursive strategies, e.g. between educationalists, those with a financial background and academic language. Where shifts in the discourse and/ or between discourses appeared to be emerging, this highlighted the absences in the discourse, what was encouraged, tolerated and rejected (*ibid*). Several discourses can co - exist and arguably there is a 'hierarchy' of a 'meta' discourse and linked policy discourses (Mair 1998). Often assumptions are implicit and infrequently discursively articulated, e.g. the intrinsic nature of education. However, at times of change and conflict between discourses, as arguably is happening in education and local government, the implicit 'founding' values become more explicit. Therefore, although discourse can be a problematic concept, awareness of the content, coherence, contradictions and challenges to the 'dominant discourse' provides a deeper and dynamic exploration of the process, perception and practice of policy.

Qualitative research can be less consistent than quantitative, a survey does not change although the respondent's perception of it may. The interviews varied, but this variety of response and insights was important. I tried to be as consistent as was possible over a long period of interviewing. A topic guide ensured that issues which I wanted to explore and compare over my sample were maintained and presented in a similar manner to the interviewee. As sole interviewer , the basic style and personality of interviewer was consistent throughout.

The findings are not intended to be generalisable. I believe that they have wider application than some studies as a greater number and range of interviewees were involved. Nevertheless, the schools involved do not constitute the entire population of each EA, nor do the EAs equate with Scottish local government. The findings are deep, detailed and diverse, they are both cross- sectional and longitudinal. They are 'representative' of the sample studied and may raise issues worthy of wider consideration, but make no further claim.

'Triangulation' is posited as a means to ameliorate the bias and improve the validity of qualitative research (Easterby-Smith *et al* 1991, Finch 1987, Keeves 1988):

'Triangulation' is a common answer to this question; the view, that is, that if one sets out different perspectives on an event, then the truth of the matter will emerge in the round, at the intersection of these perspectives. (McPherson & Raab 1988:63).

Methods suggested include the use of a range of interviewees offering varying perspectives, the development of comparative case studies and the use of primary and secondary documentation (Finch 1987, McPherson & Raab 1988). My research has employed all of these methods - furthermore, tracing the variety of response and study not only across 'actors', but also 'institutions', 'time' and 'space' (Giddens 1981). The accounts of actors are not simply 'taken-as-given', although their content is considered, but analysed alongside the historical, political, educational, legal and cultural structures within which these actors are located. Furthermore, by talking to people, I was able to 'observe' them and the institution which they 'represented':

As soon as one walks into a school, for instance, impressions are gathered about the kind of place it is, its ethos, the staff and pupils, the noise level, the state of cleanliness or otherwise, all of which go towards colouring perceptions. In an interview, similar impressions concerning the interviewee are an inevitable part of the proceedings. (Powney & Watts 1987:144).

I decided that 'formal observation' was inappropriate for researching the roles and relationships of school and EA, but that informal 'observation' of the institutions and actors was a useful supplementary to my interview data. A range of different methods and approaches have been adopted to improve the research findings and their analyses.

Conclusions

The research presented does not constitute every single detail that I discovered. As with all research, a process of selection and to an extent 'abstraction' has occurred (Powney & Watts 1987). The approach to analysis has been made explicit and the assumptions informing my research method outlined. The research focuses on the policies of DSM and Reorganisation, the process and perception of these policies and

the practical outcomes, with particular reference to the roles of schools and EAs and the relationships between the two. The period of interviewing ran from 1995 to early 1997. Accordingly the findings presented explore what appeared to be the emerging themes pertinent to this research project. However, by presenting the research firstly in a relatively descriptive form and then later developing analyses, it is hoped to allow the reader to explore the nature of the research and subsequent findings.

¹ With the exception of SRCPS5 which could not be re- interviewed until 5th March 1996.

² According to SCRE, a 'small school' in Scotland is technically one with "fewer than 120 pupils" (Somekh 1995:ii). By this definition, only GRCPS2 and SRCPS5 are small schools. However, I have used the term 'small' in a sense relative to the scale of the 'medium' and 'large' schools in my sample.

CONCLUSIONS TO PART 2

This part traced the 'context' and 'texts' relating to DSM and Reorganisation in terms of empirical, conceptual, theoretical and methodological issues.

Firstly, evidence and issues from the existing empirical findings concerning devolving school management and the local government role in education were explored and critiqued. The limited research concerning DSM and its limitations, especially lack of focus on the EA and its relationship with schools, were noted. There is no published research concerning empirical research of Reorganisation and its implications for the education function. The existing Scottish research has been influenced by the longer experience of LMS in England and the shifting roles of LEAs. However, it is suggested that a 'Scottish dimension' remains and is important. Nevertheless, the English-based research is useful and informative in providing a more thorough, detailed and diverse study of devolving school management and reforming the local government of education. Two over-arching trends are identified, namely the promotion of markets and managerialism. These are linked by notions of 'efficiency' and counter to traditional assumptions of the distinctive and collective values of education and local government, which are argued to persist strongly in Scotland. This distinctiveness accords with the premises of the 'Scottish myth' relating to collective, public provision, while support for continuing local government involvement accords with 'Partnership'.

The 'conceptual' and 'theoretical' considerations critique and de-construct the notions of 'markets' linked to the New Right and 'management' linked with the New Public Management. The former are highly abstract and idealised prescriptions, while the latter are empirically-derived and generic. Neither are fully coherent bodies of thought and their applicability to the education and local government systems is contentious, although Government policies have been influenced by their values and assumptions. Alternative conceptualisations of reform stress decentralisation as linked to democracy and collective responsibility, not privatisation and individual rights. The discourse of the three 'Es' has been pervasive but is problematic. In principle and practice, pure markets and managerialism

are unrealistic. Hence, the need to consider the nature and evolution of 'quasi- markets', alongside remaining and emerging 'hierarchy' and the potential of 'networks' also. A pure model is not being realised. Consequently, there is need for conceptual development and empirical exploration.

Hence, the need for exploratory research. Given the lack of previous study concerning DSM, Reorganisation, roles and relationships of schools and EAs in Scotland, my research is a necessary development, but must be inductive, open and exploratory. Based on the assumptions and approaches of 'policy sociology', my research concerns process, policy, perception and practice. Importantly, language is perceived as crucial. Hence the need for consideration of primary and secondary 'texts', plus fundamentally in- depth face- to - face interviewing to encounter the 'assumptive worlds' and 'subjective realities' of education officers and head teachers. While my research has considered and been influenced by the preceding 'texts' and 'contexts', an exploratory and 'open' approach was adopted whereby 'emergent' theorisation was potential.

Therefore, the next 'part begins to present, explore and understand the research findings. The interviewees' perceptions and practices towards the policies of DSM, Reorganisation, roles of schools and EAs are emphasised. However, in moving to understanding and analyses, these are also juxtaposed with issues arising from the preceding chapters.

PART 3:

EXPLORING THE EMERGING

POLICIES, PROCESS, PERCEPTIONS AND PRACTICES OF

DEVOLVED SCHOOL MANAGEMENT AND

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION.

CHAPTER 9

REPORT OF FINDINGS FROM FIELDWORK

This Chapter presents the fieldwork findings. The key sources of information are in-depth interviews with head teachers and education officers, plus primary documentation provided by these individuals and associated organisations. Interviewing was conducted in two phases; firstly, pre- reorganisation (March 1995- March 1996) in three EAs (Grampian, Highland & Strathclyde) and 25 schools; secondly, post- reorganisation (November 1996- March 1997) in 21 schools and eight successor EAs (Aberdeenshire, Argyll & Bute, City of Aberdeen, City of Glasgow, East Renfrewshire, Highland, North Lanarkshire & South Lanarkshire).

The research focuses on the policies of DSM and Reorganisation. The perception, process and practical implications of these policies are considered. These policies are not static. Rather there is the process of introducing the policy, plus developments and diversity within the policies after initiation. Opinion was sought on the education system before these policies and how it is changing and emerging in light of these changes. The research of what the education system was like pre-DSM is based on the interviewees' 'oral histories' (Ozga 1987). Prediction of future possibilities and issues relies on the opinion of the interviewees. This information is informative and interesting. Nevertheless, one is on most solid ground when researching the 'present' and indeed many 'presents' that evolved within the period of my study. It is on this understanding of 'what is going on' and how it has progressed that my research findings are strongest. The research has a certain 'chronological' order; however, the findings cannot explore fully the complexity of change and emerging system, although they offer illumination.

Hence, my research findings offer brief consideration of how the education system pre- DSM and pre- Reorganisation was perceived. The introduction and nature of DSM are explored in detail both pre and post- Reorganisation. The perception towards the proposed Reorganisation is discussed via findings from the phase one fieldwork. These perceptions are then developed and evidence explored in light of actual Reorganisation in the phase two fieldwork. The implications of DSM and

Reorganisation for the education service, especially the roles of schools and EAs are considered. Finally, consideration of perceived future issues expressed by the interviewees is explored. While the research focuses on DSM and Reorganisation specifically, in reality, this is an artificial demarcation from the range of policies and issues affecting schools and EAs, e.g. CCT, opting out and curricular reform. The issue of opting out was mentioned most frequently and holds potentially the greatest challenge to the traditional relationship between school and EA. Therefore, other policy issues will be highlighted although not explored to the same depth as DSM or Reorganisation.

The Education System Pre- DSM

Interviewees highlighted problems with the education system pre- DSM, especially financial procedures and managerial issues. From the EA perspective, there was a lack of accurate information about individual school costs, poor financial management and ultimately a lack of accountability at school- level. From the school perspective, they lacked the capacity for managerial decision- making, relied on lengthy and slow requisition procedures and had little say in staff selection. The system was problematic.

Nevertheless, changes had begun before DSM. In Strathclyde, the INLOGOV Report and related reforms resulted in the 'cost centre' exercise identifying individual school costs. A similar procedure began in Grampian because of the School Boards Act. In Grampian, the existence of an Area structure and the devolution of responsibility for Principal teacher appointments and some budgets were cited. In Highland, officers emphasised that it always had some decentralisation - the Education Department adopted "a reasonably hands- off view", various budgets were devolved, schools could place direct orders for some services, and a decentralised structure of schools and Divisions existed. Head teachers recognised budgets and procedures were devolved, but emphasised these were limited and ultimately the EA retained control, e.g. budgets distribution.

To an extent in all the Regions, decentralisation was present pre- DSM. However, there are differences in how this level of decentralisation was perceived and consequently how the role of the school and EA and the relationship between the two were explained. Highland officers stressed the Region's decentralist tendency. In Grampian, it was argued that a process of decentralisation had begun but was not extensive and did not yet go far enough. In Strathclyde, although the cost centre exercise had begun, the image of the old education system is a centralist and conflict-ridden one. Head teachers spoke of the system as "centralised" and "inflexible". While an officer talked of " a fairly combative relationship between Directors and Heads". Furthermore, the education department was "remote from the wishes of the public" and this removed parental involvement and a 'customer- focus'. Relationships were "hierarchical" and there were some duplication of roles rather than a clear separation of roles and responsibilities. These factors are perceived negatively and hence change was advocated.

The relationship with the Divisions was particularly contentious in Strathclyde and to a lesser extent in Grampian. In Grampian, officers perceived a problem when the allocation of resources to schools was "at the whim of the Area manager", arguing that clear and equitable formula are preferable. In Strathclyde, the problem is more fundamental questioning the existence of Divisions. The Regional officers personalise the problems as being related to the nature of the Divisional EOs - they perceived themselves as "mini- Directors of Education" who sabotaged the implementation of policy from Central control, as the "Divisions felt almost autonomous". Consequently, the beliefs in Strathclyde of the need to reform the system, re- define roles and ultimately usurp "these medieval barons". However, head teachers spoke more favourably of Divisional EOs.

The Movement to DSM

All of the above encouraged the move to DSM. All of the officers believed this was based on 'good management' principles and practice. In Grampian and Highland, the education department had begun consideration of devolving budgets although DSM 'overtook' their own considerations. Strathclyde initiated their scheme of DMR.

Managerial arguments were utmost in this development. However, one officer argued that the emerging 'context of competition and markets' as evident in England was influential. Furthermore, DSM/DMR provided the opportunity not only to 'empower' schools but also to 'dis-empower', "to get rid of these bureaucratic Divisions". Hence, the agenda in Strathclyde was not simply managerial; it was 'political' in light of national developments and organisational issues. In the other EAs, the issue was not as high on the agenda but did have some consideration due to belief in management development and the seeming inevitability of devolved management being introduced given international trends.

The Development of Scottish DSM

Strathclyde Regional Council introduced DMR in 1990, while national DSM began implementation in 1994. The Strathclyde officers believed their policy of DMR influenced the nature of DSM advocated by the Scottish Office and practised throughout Scotland. This enthusiasm was shared by the head teachers in Strathclyde where several commented that DMR was 'better than' other schemes in Scotland. However, that DMR is 'better than' suggests that it is 'different from' the other Regions' schemes. Grampian and Highland acknowledged that in devising their schemes they 'looked around' at other authorities. Given that Strathclyde had implemented DMR, this policy was considered but not fully adopted. Highland believed that given their different nature from Strathclyde, a different scheme would be more appropriate. They did however draw on experience from the rural Dumfries & Galloway pilot and were aided by a key individual in this pilot becoming an officer in Highland. Similarly, Grampian drew upon contacts and personal experience out-with their Region, this time from England. They rejected also the DMR model perceiving the support structure as both 'too intensive and too expensive' and the nature of the system as being under- developed:

We looked at DMR but we found it very flawed in terms of a properly devolved system... the local authority still kept ultimately managerial control over it, to the point where it was difficult for schools to get a real feel of what it would be like to be on their own. There were a lot of safety nets written into the system.

Factors perceived by Strathclyde as strengths of DMR were perceived as weaknesses by other EAs.

One officer expressed concern that there was not more “sharing” of experiences between EAs in the development of DSM and the encountering and resolving of problems. Especially, at the school- level, there was general lack of awareness and vagueness about experiences out- with their own authority, although there were exceptions where individuals had moved between authorities or had close colleagues elsewhere. This calls into question a ‘Scottish- wide’ approach and consensus.

DSM in Comparison with LMS

However, as with the homogenising anti- English nature of ‘Scottish myth’, interviewees across the EAs believed that Scottish DSM was superior to LMS. Head teachers spoke of being “appalled by LMS” and “terrified” that it was to be introduced to Scotland. There was a widespread belief that the use of actual salaries in DSM was crucial. Other features, e.g. actual costs for property, recognition of AEN and protection of SEN were advocated and applied. These were intended to overcome the “pitfalls of LMS” (SRCEO1).

When Strathclyde mooted the development of DMR, there was concern that LMS was being introduced. Officers attempted to convince people otherwise:

we were saying to people we are going to try and take national legislation, amend it to take account of our, the Scottish dimension, and try to influence it for the good... it was described as a Trojan Horse that we were selling a pass and that Local Financial Management would come in Scotland... it was a very, very difficult period when people were beginning to feel that we were beginning to betray the Scottish dimension. (SRCEO4).

This quote emphasises the importance and prevalence of a ‘Scottish dimension’ pervading education policy. SRCEO1 spoke also of the need to avoid ‘English policy’:

we tried to ... provide the benefits of local decision- making without some of the pitfalls that occurred in England and Wales... convincing folks that the

scheme we were about to launch was very significantly different and that it avoided the educationally damaging aspects of the mechanistic approach that was being followed... in England and Wales.

The argument continues that by changing the nature and policy of DMR/ DSM, general acceptance and indeed advocacy of DMR/DSM was created. One of the strategies used was to constrain and limit the scope for managerial autonomy and responsibilities at school- level. It is argued of LMS that:

one of the short- comings that we addressed was that because of the degree of flexibility that Heads had down South, they could breach national agreements and they could recruit teachers at low levels in the salary scale and so on (SRCEO4).

Hence, in DMR and DSM, such breaches cannot occur, as head teachers must stay within national standards and Regional agreements. Consequently, SRCEO1 explains “head teachers were not in a position of absolutely unfettered freedom”. The Strathclyde rhetoric is of the ‘empowered establishment’ and ‘freedom within a framework’. However, an ongoing issue is the extent to which ‘freedom’ can be a relative concept and how an acceptable balance between ‘freedom’ and ‘constraint’ can be achieved. Unlike the situation in England where schools have greater ‘freedom’, the Scottish approach suggests the continued need for EA involvement.

In terms of national DSM, it was argued that the Scottish Office were also adopting a ‘less mechanistic’ approach than had occurred South of the border:

what came out from the Government regarding the consultation period, it may be changing now, they were less concerned about 80% or 75% or 90%, as opposed to true devolution of decision- making... the arithmetical calculations weren’t that important. (GRCEO2).

It is suggested that LMS was an ‘unashamed’ political measure to force school closures, which must be resisted in Scotland. A ‘Scottish dimension’ is perceived as the Government’s initial intentions were not as overtly political and fiscal as in England, but may become more so. Furthermore, rather than an universal ‘Scottish approach’, differences between EAs may emerge.

Managing the Change to DSM

The Regions varied in the extent to which they explicitly 'managed' the process of change associated with DSM. Strathclyde were the most explicit and active, affecting not only organisational structures and practices, but culture and commitment also. DMR was introduced along with a raft of changes associated with the INLOGOV Report. The DoE decided that such change required commitment and loyalty, hence all senior education officers posts were open to advertisement and people had to choose whether to re-apply for a post knowing the types of reforms that would be occurring. This was a dramatic step intended to overcome the 'complacency' inherent in the system, destabilise people and ultimately generate loyalty and commitment. In reforming the education department, a communications unit was created, which was involved in the promotion of DMR¹. The attempt was to "carry staff with you". As concerns DMR, the tactic appears to have been successful. A 'culture' believing in the benefits of DMR appears pervasive at school and EA level. DMR was not only a practical policy but it was associated with a specific promotional discourse, the rhetoric of which was espoused in the communication's promotions and frequently cited by my interviewees. However, as an officer commented the use of such an approach depends upon "management styles and personalities".

The other two Regions were neither as explicit nor as extensive in their attempt to manage the change to DSM. Grampian attempted to do so by the appointment of a Project Manager, who was previously a teacher, and the creation of a Project Management Team, involving representatives seconded from primary and secondary sectors. This process proceeded from late 1992 and several task groups were formed to consider specific issues concerning DSM policy throughout the consultation stages. In Highland, there was less explicit concern to 'manage' the 'culture' of DSM, although it was recognised that there was need to support its practical implementation and to consult with head teachers' representatives. Nevertheless, in these cases, especially Highland, many head teachers were ill-informed about the details and process of the policy.

The Policy of DSM

DSM involves the devolution of at least 80% of school-based budget to school-level. Therefore, specified budget lines are delegated to the school. Virement and carry-forward may be possible. Delegation of responsibilities for staffing appointments is included also. The system of DSM is supported through clerical and IT supports. This is the general policy of DSM throughout Scotland. However, the national policy required each EA to determine their own specific scheme within general guidelines, therefore some differences in detail exist. Furthermore, due to practical experience and council decisions, the policy and practice of DSM varied.

A fundamental difference between DSM in the Regions is in terminology (see table 9.1). Strathclyde pioneered their policy of 'DMR' and were keen to maintain their title and distinctiveness. In moving from DMR pre and post DSM, some changes were made to include the national requirement for consultation with school boards and staffing delegation. The term DMR emphasises the Strathclyde dimension and is political as a distancing from LMS and SOEID-determined DSM. The policy of DMR was supported by the Labour-controlled council because it would create educational improvements and linked to SRC's 'community development' model of decentralisation.

In Grampian, the movement to the term 'DEM' was political also. Devolved Education Management was selected on the grounds of educational appropriateness and equity; devolution was to be to all educational establishments, e.g. community education, not simply schools. This was broader than either national DSM or Strathclyde DMR. The political element was due to the SNP threatening to oppose and prevent the introduction of DSM as it was perceived as an English and Tory policy. Hence, officers had to stress the educational and managerial benefits of 'DEM' and reject its political origins. There was an assertion that DSM was positive for schools but should not undermine the EA.

In Highland, members expressed concerns about DSM, however these were more pragmatic, the resource implications and applicability to small schools, rather than

partisan. Highland maintained the SOEID's terminology of 'DSM'. This may be symbolic, as it appeared that the Region was reacting to a policy that was required and to an extent imposed by Central Government. The development of DSM in Highland has been slower and more reactive than Grampian, which in turn has been slower than Strathclyde. Although in Highland there is a belief in decentralisation and the greatest proportion of budget has been delegated.

Table 9.1: Terminology and level of 'DSM' in each Region

Region	Title for 'DSM'	% of budget devolved
Grampian	DEM (Devolved Education Management)	84%
Highland	DSM (Devolved School Management)	88.4%
Strathclyde	DMR (Delegated Management of Resources)	84.9% in primary 86.7% in secondary

The documentation relating to DSM in each EA provides detail of the individual schemes². There is a general similarity with specified budgets devolved, formula developed relating to each budget heading, delegation for staffing selection but the maintenance of the EA as employer and the use of actual salaries, mandatory and discretionary budgets which are not devolved, the capacity for carry-forward and virement, and the requirement to adhere to national and regional guidelines and minimum standards. The budget is devolved to the head teacher, however consultation with staff should occur. Strathclyde is the only EA studied which made the formal requirement of a 'Staff Consultative Committee'³. Grampian's commitment to a wide view of DEM alters the treatment of establishments in this area. The property budget operates based on a 'landlord/ tenant' arrangement, similar to Highland but different from the devolution of actual costs in Strathclyde. The principle of 'dual management' indicates that for one establishment, there may be two managers. The most common example is where a head teacher is responsible for the running of the school during the day, but a community education 'manager' is responsible for costs incurred during community use in the evenings. The aim is to prevent schools subsidising non-school activities, but the separation of budgets is problematic. Hence, within the general principles of DSM nation-wide, the policies of staff consultative committees in Strathclyde and 'dual management' in Grampian are unique within my research sites.

Support Structures for DSM

All the EAs combined a mixture of manual and IT supports, plus training to aid the development of DSM. In general, officers at Regional level were involved in developing and supporting DSM, sometimes involving the appointment of specialised staff, e.g. accountants. At the local level officer support was created also. Finally in schools, the remit of office staff altered to involve DSM and extra clerical hours were provided, ranging depending on the Region, sector and scale of school. Within this general model, there are differences between the Regions (see appendices K- M). Highland had the most basic structure and support was still being developed. The implementation of DSM began in April 1994 but by late 1995, the roles of 'Finance Officers' and 'System Support Officers' were only just being advertised. The other Regions developed support systems before the start of DSM. In Grampian, a DEM Project Team was created involving school personnel and Regional officers. Contact between schools and Centre was direct via a 'help desk' and contact with the DEM Team members. However, AFOs were appointed and based at 'area' level. In Strathclyde, support was both direct between Centre and school and involved a number of local layers. A central DMR budget unit and Educational Computer Support Unit (ECSU) were involved, under the responsibility of a specialised Senior EO and involving a number of specialised non- educational employees also. At the local level, there were extra clerical hours in every school, an Administration and Finance Assistant (AFA) in every school 'cluster', i.e. a secondary and its feeder primaries, an Administration and Finance Officer (AFO) for clusters of schools and a higher grade Administration Principal Officer (APO) in every Division. Thus while the notion of a network of support and appointment of expert staff is common, the precise extent and nature of this support varied. Across the interviewees, there was agreement that "the support arrangement proved very important".

The head teachers in Strathclyde were enthusiastic about the Regional support, believing it to be "excellent" and using "experienced people". The AFA and the DMR clerkess were recognised as important support at school- level. However, there were variations in perception between the primary and secondary sectors. In all schools studied, the AFA was based in the secondary school and became head of the school

office. This caused some conflict in responsibilities and priorities with a general feeling that primaries were neglected. The Strathclyde rhetoric was that head teachers should rely on AFAs and DMR clerkesses for manual, clerical, IT and budgetary support, thereby “freeing head teachers to concentrate on the educational management aspects of DMR”. The head teacher in SRCSS3 came closest to this ideal, relying on support and delegating responsibilities for the day- to- day running of DMR. Other secondary heads spoke of the benefits of an experienced and helpful AFA. By contrast, the primary heads suggested they could not rely on the AFA, as support was limited, unreliable and diminishing. When there were absences in the secondary school office, the AFA covered these and did not maintain contact with the primaries. Furthermore, when the AFA is absent, no cover is provided, leaving the primary to “flounder on”. There are problems also when the AFA did not appreciate the nature of the primary school, e.g. arriving during lunch- times when the head teacher and DMR clerkess were involved with ‘lunch duty’. Primaries ‘lost out’ also when their school secretaries sought promotion by becoming AFAs, resulting in the loss of an experienced member of staff. As more schools became involved in DMR, the AFA’s remit was extended resulting in a reduction in contact and meetings with the original schools. Contrary to the notion of secondary heads being ‘reliant’ on their AFA, primary heads had developed means of working around the system:

And if it wasn’t that we had competent staff in school who are almost like a self- help group and help each other, the whole thing would fall flat on it’s face.

Another head stressed the need to be vociferous and develop a “chain of contact”. This is not the ‘safety- net’ of support initially envisaged.

The DMR clerkess is perceived as a “real necessity”. This person is generally a former school secretary who has responsibility for the day- to - day running of DMR. Given the larger scale of secondary schools and budget levels, most secondaries employed a full- time DMR clerkess. In some schools, this person’s role was substantially enlarged⁴.

By contrast, in primary schools DMR clerkesses are frequently part-time and may have to combine this role with being school secretary also. There can be conflict, e.g. if the DMR clerkess is out of school on DMR training, her role as secretary is 'lost'. There was a general concern that DMR clerkesses did not have enough hours to do their duties. The situation was exacerbated as the number of DMR clerkess hours were reduced in the shift from the 'pilot' to 'non-pilot' phase of DMR⁵. There were differences in the levels of support and capacity to 'buy in' extra support between the sectors.

In Grampian, a central DEM Project Team was created:

Largely because this Authority is very, very lean at the Centre... And because of the largeness of the task, it was not thought sensible that it should be taken on by individuals who had very, very big commitments anyway. And that was the reason for setting up a discrete Team in the first instance. But...that discrete Team has operated through Task Teams which have included all of the relevant Members of the existing Directorate and staffing section and so on. (GRCEO4)

The DEM Team members believe that it was advantageous for schools:

it meant that we were... genuinely listening to what the schools wanted and were able to present their case to the politicians. Now had we run it entirely centrally within part of an Assistant Director's remit that never would have happened.

This is interesting not only for the type of support created but for also concerning the assumptions about the roles of Senior EOs and their relationships with schools. The reason that the DEM Team was perceived as 'closer' to schools was due to the inclusion of a head teacher from the primary and secondary sectors as full-time members. These members held monthly 'Review Group' meetings with the head teachers who were implementing DEM. This enabled the heads to talk to each other and generally discuss DEM. Issues could be pursued at Central level⁶. It is believed that the Review Group was "very, very beneficial" (GRCEO3). However, the problems with operating a 'discrete' DEM Team is that DEM remains discrete from the rest of EA business:

DEM initially was just seen as an add on that would be dealt with by the DEM Project Team. But I don't think it has really permeated through our educational colleagues, the implications for them of DEM. (GRCEO2).

Unlike Strathclyde where DMR was part of a pervasive and fundamental reform of the education service, DEM in Grampian "doesn't percolate to the outreaches of the Region, in fact even to some members of the Centre, they don't know the scheme" (GRCEO1).

The secondary heads in Grampian were generally unhappy with the support provided. Many believed this was due to the circumstances in which DEM was introduced - lack of resources; the transition to Reorganisation creating upheaval; and personnel involved was inexperienced in DEM. There was a perception that DEM was not a priority, due to impending Reorganisation and the minority of schools involved. Generally, the Review Group was perceived as a positive "forum for discussion", but its capacity to generate change was constrained and variable. The secondary heads spoke of having to fight to get adequate support from the AFO, based at area level, given the large number of schools in their remit. The support from the AFO was frequently unsatisfactory, they did not have answers and therefore created 'frustration', and slow, the AFO then went to Central staff for the answers and passed the response back down this chain. The primary heads were slightly more supportive, explaining that they could telephone the AFO. However, they had to become accustomed to telephoning for help, as face- to- face visits were only bi-annually. There was a perception that there should be more 'local' support, either the Area's function should be enhanced, or support per Associated Schools Group (ASG - equivalent to SRC's 'cluster') should be created. It was proposed that support at regional and local level should be improved.

In Highland, at central level, a core budget unit was created, supported by accountants and education officers. During the creation of the DSM scheme, a range of User Groups was formed to consider specific issues. Their membership included representatives of schools and the EA. There was only one permanent group: "the Steering Group, which is the on- going group which oversees the operation of the

scheme. That group seems to be working very well.” (HRCEO2). Unlike the full- time Grampian DEM Team, the Steering Group meets as necessary and the head teacher representatives remain working within their school full- time. Regionally- appointed support staff are located at the Divisional level to provide “grassroots support for the head teachers” (HRCEO2). It was decided that a Finance Officer and System Support Officer should be located at Divisional level rather than secondary school level, as many primaries were concerned about this arrangement given the experience in Strathclyde. Furthermore, Highland has a large number of small primaries some of which are located up to 70 miles away from their associated secondary, hence support located in the secondary would be unworkable. At school- level, extra clerical hours were provided on a flat rate of five hours for primary and eight for secondary.

Overall, the head teachers in Highland were happy with the support they received. All heads believed that the Finance and Systems Support Officers in their Division were “exceptional”, “terrific, absolutely first class”. Schools could telephone for support. However, unlike Grampian, there was regular and important face- to- face contact also:

obviously when you’re going out to see people face- to- face they’re telling you things or asking you things that they wouldn’t necessarily phone you up about. And I think the relationship between everyone involved and the school are very good. And there’s a lot of team information. (HRCEO4).

The Steering Group was perceived positively as a mechanism for consultation with the Region, although its use was still developing. All the secondary heads believed that they had sufficient clerical time in school and that there were ‘no real problems’. The larger primary (HRCPS3) was faring better than the smaller ones (HRCPS1 & 2). For example, in HRCPS3 the workload for DSM was shared amongst a number of clerical staff, whereas in the small primaries reliant upon one clerical assistant there was insufficient time. There were concerns about future levels of support as in Highland budgets were devolved in phases and the schools were about to receive their staffing budgets at the same time as the third phase of a larger number of schools entered DSM, potentially diminishing support, and the transition to Reorganisation. Nevertheless, the support was generally perceived as satisfactory.

Computer System

All three Regions recognised the importance of developing an adequate computer network to link schools and EA, to enable budgetary and financial management and to facilitate monitoring of accounts and procedures. However, the systems adopted varied.

Strathclyde developed an extensive independent computer network. For DSM, budgetary information is carried from schools via Unix boxes to the ECSU in the Central authority. The systems can be used for other purposes also, e.g. developing an internal school network and in providing information to external bodies. It was believed that the systems were pioneering and efficient. At school-level, there was support for the computer system. Initially, there were “teething problems” and over time the computer system changed significantly. However, head teachers were happy with the system and perceived some functions, such as computerised direct purchasing as “excellent”. However, one primary head was concerned that the school had no choice over computer system and part of their delegated budget was used for rental of this system. Therefore, the computer system aided DSM but offered schools no choice in its actual nature.

By contrast, Grampian and Highland considered using a computer package developed by:

the Scottish Council for Educational Technology had for ... a number of years, gone into a consortia with all of local authorities, apart from Strathclyde, putting in admin, local admin systems. They took it one step further and developed a financial package- a book- keeping, commitment, record system. (GRCEO2).

This was named SCAMP (Schools Computer Administration & Management Package). Grampian decided to implement SCAMP to support DEM. However, this package proved problematic: “largely because of: a) initial user unfriendliness, and b) workload, came a bit unstuck” (GRCEO2). A process of review occurred, including development of local systems that carry information between school and EA. This is perceived as a radical development: “we’ve turned local authority computing upside-

down". The long-term "strategy is one major computer network linking all establishments". However, previously this could not be achieved due to the speed at which DSM was required to be developed and implemented. The capacity to develop adequate computer systems is ongoing:

So the biggest threat to DEM is not an educational threat, it's the inability of the central systems which were never created for DEM to actually cope, and that is still the case. (GRCEO2).

While Strathclyde had invested time and money into resolving the computer needs, this was problematic in Grampian.

Head teachers spoke of initial teething and on-going problems with the computer system:

It's more frustration... when they introduce an archaic computer system, and it's so frustrating that you know the countless hours that the secretary's put in. She's fed in every piece of information regarding pupils, regarding finances, yet you can't get a simple class list with the information you need. It's the frustration at not being able to access something you know is there and it should be easy. And it is the frustration at the time you'll lose because of it. (GRCPS4).

It is recognised that the system is being developed and problems will "hopefully be resolved" with the capacity to be more 'accurate' and 'efficient' than manual systems. Only in one secondary was SCAMP extended as both a management and educational tool⁷. By contrast, many of the primary heads were apprehensive about the introduction of SCAMP. They perceived SCAMP as an additional and different burden to DEM:

Because unfortunately we came into SCAMP as well as DEM in the first year, and that added to our problems. (GRCPS4).

Another head spoke of the two combined as being "too much. The system is too complicated. SCAMP was a mistake. It should have been phased in.". These heads preferred the retention of manual systems, even if alongside computerisation. There is a general perception that too many problems remained, manual checks were required and the system was "not good enough".

In Highland, the aim was to develop a computer network but at the time of interviewing (late 1995/ early 1996), this was at the “interim stages”. Highland rejected SCAMP due to its “unfriendly” nature. It was therefore decided to wait and view the newer version of SCAMP, SCETWORKS, however its finalisation was delayed several times:

in its absence we have written in- house a package...we are persevering with it as an interim solution..., we won't make a final decision until we finally see SCETWORKS, and whether it actually will do the job. So we're in an interim situation in terms of software, it's causing a bit of a problem... It's easy to use and it does the main functions but we know there's an awful lot more that a proper software package could do, and there's a whole lot more that you could automate that's having to be done manually at the moment... So it's a bit frustrating.

There are financial difficulties also in purchasing the necessary hardware to cover the large number of small schools in Highland creating high investment costs. Therefore, the system has emerged almost by de- fault as an ‘interim’ solution rather than the conscious design and investment in Strathclyde.

The head teachers were unhappy and frustrated by this system. The schools had AppleMacs and many wished to keep these rather than having to change hardware:

The Hardware was never popular and was the toy, the pet project of an Assistant Director who more or less forced it on us. (HRCSS2).

The initial unavailability of software was problematic. One primary head recognised that the present system is a “stop- gap measure” but is concerned that:

the longer that it is in place the more difficult it will be to change it in the future, as the schools have experience of the present system.. The Authority must take account of this if the system is changed at a later date... if new software is introduced will it be the start of problems again?. (HRCPS2).

There was concern about the computer system and the Region's determination of the system with little involvement of school- level opinion.

Training

Training was necessary to aid the implementation and development of DSM. Training was targeted mostly on clerical staff with some limited training offered to head teachers also. In all authorities, the training was concentrated on the schools entering each phase of DSM. In Strathclyde, three of the heads from pilot secondaries were involved in providing later training. Only in Strathclyde was training focussed on schools before they came 'on line'. However, phasing training pre- DSM meant that when staff changed over some missed training⁸. Heads felt that a lot of their training was 'inadequate' and 'irrelevant', although secondary heads in Strathclyde were more positive. In Grampian and Highland, the heads were critical of the content of training, believing it did not address the needs, practice and process of 'financial management'. In Highland, training was given in- school and reactions to this were mixed - one head approved as it was 'hands-on', while another said it would have been better to be taken out of school to avoid interruptions. In Grampian and Highland, there was a feeling that those providing the training were inexperienced in issues related to DSM. Mostly, experience was 'learning through doing'. While training had improved, it required further development.

Cost of DSM

DSM requires considerable investment of time, resources and finance by the EA. In Strathclyde, where Members were committed to DMR, £50,000 was spent on support and technology for each pilot cluster. National DSM was introduced against a backdrop of increasing restraint on local authority spending. Although money was provided by the Scottish Office for DSM, it was included in the general Revenue Support Grant not separately ring- fenced. For Highland and Grampian, the money provided was perceived as insufficient and problems resulted⁹. In Highland, budget constraints have slowed the implementation of DSM. There was realisation that decentralised structures were costly but potentially beneficial. It was this belief that sustained the need to devote resources to the development of DSM. Pre-Reorganisation there was growing concerns about the cost of Reorganisation and its impact on the development of DSM.

DSM Post- Reorganisation

Changes in support structures, practical details and procedures are emerging. Overall, in the former Highland Region DSM remained very similar. In the former Grampian, DEM has been initially “inherited for expediency” (AEO2), but the intention is to review and evolve this. As was the case in the former Strathclyde EAs also, with the exceptions of North Lanarkshire who reviewed the system and South Lanarkshire who devised their own Scheme pre- full Reorganisation. Several of the former Strathclyde EAs have moved from the term ‘DMR’, ‘the Strathclyde term’ to the ‘national term’ of DSM, this was explained as differentiating their own approach but not as an “anti-Strathclyde” policy as DMR remains perceived as a positive policy which can now be developed.

Table 9.2 Terminology of ‘DSM’ and Levels of Budget Devolved

Education Authority	Terminology	% of Budget Devolved
Highland	DSM (Devolved School Management)	80% (approx.- may be 1 or 2% higher)
Aberdeenshire	DEM (Devolved Education Management)	80- 85%
City of Aberdeen	DEM	82%
Argyll & Bute	DMR (Delegated Management of Resources)	80% (approx.- may be less)
City of Glasgow	DSM	87% (aiming for 90%)
East Renfrewshire	DSM	86- 88%
North Lanarkshire	DSM	84%
South Lanarkshire	DMS (Devolved Management for Schools)	82% (Primary) 84% (Secondary)

Differences between DSM in Former Highland Region and Post- Reorganisation

In Highland, there was very little change in DSM pre- and post- Reorganisation. Budget restrictions led to reductions in some budget lines. There were changes in the detail of certain budget lines, e.g. supply cover and vandalism, to improve their working. There was limited change in personnel involved with DSM. Two schools had been given a one year pilot of 100% of their property budget being devolved. The schools believed this was “wonderful”, but realised that due to cost implications this was an unique and short- lived pilot. The Admin & Finance and Systems Support Officers were having less face- to- face contact with head teachers. There were two reasons: firstly, with experience schools were having less problems with DSM;

secondly, the EA had advised them to keep their travelling costs minimal. Budgetary issues were the main factor and ironically in some respects were eroding the development of a 'closer' relationship post- Reorganisation. The head teachers perceived 'little change' with DSM. Nevertheless, there were concerns about the small primaries with teaching heads coming onto DSM¹⁰.

Differences between DSM in Former Grampian Region and Post- Reorganisation

Aberdeenshire and City of Aberdeen maintained Grampian's Scheme and terminology of DEM. However, both authorities intend to review and improve the Scheme of Delegation. Although the term 'DEM' was adopted, which includes a connotation of community and school education, Aberdeenshire intend to shift away from 'dual management' to one of single- management per site. In City of Aberdeen, it was proposed to retain dual management, but this was controversial. Thus far, the main changes result from budgetary implications.

Aberdeenshire and City of Aberdeen had altered their support structures. Grampian's notion of a DEM Team no longer exists:

We've also moved away from a situation where there was... a unit which decidedly got in the way and spawned numerous working groups. And we've kept that much smaller. (COAEO2).

In City of Aberdeen, there is an officer specified as DEM co-ordinator, a small review group, a newly created implementation group and the intention to create an user group. Aberdeenshire had developed a similar system with a combination of a review group, officer involvement and the use of central support services. Both authorities were proposing to develop their own computer system.

The development of IT was integral to Aberdeenshire's proposals for making a more appropriate, flexible, efficient and economical education system. The proposal was to start with "almost a blank bit of paper" and determine what developments were required:

We are seriously looking at a kind of phone banking system, where DEM involves no bits of paper whatsoever, and you literally make management

decisions, you don't make administrative decisions. There's a part of us that thinks DEM is not DEM, it's DA, Devolved Administration. And you've got the big concerns about workload and teachers spending less and less time with teachers and pupils... we think that one of the ways forward is phone banking and computerised networks of schools, centrally supported. (AEO1).

This is an ambitious proposal, however its practicability remains to be seen. To a certain extent, it is a similar model to the Strathclyde ECSU that could arguably have been extended Scotland-wide, facilitating economical central provision and local usage.

In City of Aberdeen, there was a recognition of the need to clarify and develop DEM also. However, it was the human element of operational changes that were emphasised:

this is the most significant change in education in Scotland traditionally, and yet it was kind of handled in a kind of procedural way and not given the chance to think... we've brought the head teacher much more into the detail, both in terms of policy and procedure. (COAEO2).

This quote is interesting for perceiving DSM as a radical change to the 'Scottish tradition' and one that had in many ways been underestimated by 'the system'. There has been a tendency to try to deal with change as minimally as possible rather than seizing an opportunity for proactive and pervasive reform.

Differences between DSM in Former Strathclyde Region and Post-Reorganisation

All the former SRC EAs were operating under the Strathclyde Scheme of Delegation, except South Lanarkshire. There were similarities being maintained due to Strathclyde's DMR people being re-employed as DSM people in the new EAs. There were similarities also as the Strathclyde ECSU was to remain intact for two years, hence all former Strathclyde EAs were using the same computer support and system as previously. Nevertheless, there were variations in the anticipation as to whether they would maintain this system after two years. A further source of similarity was the impact of budget cuts:

So what you have is a picture of devolved management operating in exactly the same way as it did under Strathclyde, but with a funding budgetary crisis, that is certainly more real than imagined. (A&BPS1).

Policy decisions in each Council may create different responses to these pressures. In the former Strathclyde EAs there remains an essential similarity of approach to DSM, but the beginnings of change and the possibility that in future years, after the initial transition phase, greater differences may emerge.

Argyll & Bute applied their general philosophy of “if it's not broken, don't fix it” (A&BEO1) to DMR, being the only EA to retain this terminology. Nevertheless, there were potential future changes. Officers believed there were certain “anomalies within the Strathclyde scheme with regard to ... our area... rural schools”. Adaptations in the budget may occur to take account of the nature of the locality. The overall budget may also create later changes, as different computer systems and support structures may be adopted if a cheaper method could be found. In terms of support, the main change was that the AFO was much more involved with the Central EA. One other feature of scale and policy was the perception at school- level that the Centre was being more centralist and “pulling... powers back” , e.g. for staffing selection. Thus in Argyll & Bute, change was slow and reactive, predominantly driven by budgetary concerns and the smaller scale of the EA. Head teachers were concerned about the diminution of DSM/DMR.

In City of Glasgow, minor amendments had been made to DSM, these were largely budget related, e.g. altering virement. However, a substantial review of the future nature of DSM was being initiated, conducted by a senior officer and involving a range of head teachers. The ECSU computer system may be maintained, as there was nothing perceived better available, but would need to develop. The nature of support would alter also:

The AFO's role will change. We're moving towards a quadrant basis for whole lots of administration in the City... The AFOs become Area Budget Officers. So they will be responsible for monitoring the budget in the quadrant.

And the AFA hopefully will become full- time. Instead of just now they are supposed to be managers of the school office as well. (COGEO2).

As in Argyll & Bute, the role of support staff was to be enlarged, however given the scale of Glasgow the AFO would remain at an area-level, although a larger one.

The overriding aim in Glasgow is to increase devolution and “further strengthen delegated responsibilities” (COGEO2). To this end, certain policies had been developed, e.g. schools enter service- level agreements with EA services. The development of contracts was encouraged also through trying to give schools a greater involvement in the client management function of CCT arrangements. This philosophy of increasing devolution is inherent in the shift to the term DSM rather than DMR:

we’ve tried to see it as something wider than finance... we prefer to talk about devolved management, rather than management of resources.... it is a wider notion, the whole issue of development planning, looking at organisations making decisions without always having to come here and ask our permission. So that’s our emphasis, on management devolved rather than just the resources element.

Another officer spoke of the need to ameliorate the limitations of DMR:

I think we’ve got to free up some of the strictures of Strathclyde... we’ve got to allow genuine flexibility in schools. And we should be getting towards a system of simplifying budget delegation. Giving head teachers more global budgets... And we’ve got to actively encourage them to view themselves as being managers of the establishment, with all aspects of it, and with the ability to make choice. And just now, the only choice... is to decide what they do with what’s left over. I don’t see a lot of choice on day one. But the Strathclyde scheme was centralist and Draconian and Stalinist and generous.

The aim was to encourage the freedom and flexibility to facilitate managerial decision- making associated with managerial responsibility at school- level.

However, at the school- level there was little awareness of these drives for increased devolution of power and freedom. Rather talk was of the implications of tightening

budgets, constraints on procedures, reduced support, and Glasgow perceived as centralist:

I think they centralise more, I don't think the school has any say... Although we have the budget, although we tailor the budget to suit spending... (able for Centre to take things back)... basically we just rubber stamp... (Centre takes back) any money they might try and find. (DSM as a bill-paying service with no choice)... And if that's the way it's going, that is certainly not the way of Strathclyde.

There are several issues. Firstly, the context of DSM has changed dramatically since Strathclyde's early project, which was heavily resourced and supported. All pilot schools witnessed diminishing resources and support over the years. Secondly, the officers were aware that they had not yet achieved their ideal of greater devolution and flexibility. Thirdly, officers did not appear to have communicated their long-term vision and development to schools. Fourthly, in the movement to a 'closer' relationship between EA and school combined with budgetary retrenchment, despite an espoused policy of decentralisation, it was easy for schools to perceive increasing centralisation. There is evidence of structural factors determining certain consequences, e.g. budget cuts, which agents in EAs were mediating and offering alternative visions, but which were perceived in significantly different ways by other agents within schools.

East Renfrewshire intended to review the Strathclyde Scheme and create their own. There was uncertainty about the future development of the computer system, but a belief that the ECSU system was good. The support structures had altered - a Head of Service was in charge of DSM, supported by a Finance Controller and senior DSM support staff whose roles and remits were enlarged. While DMR was perceived as positive, elements needed to change:

while Strathclyde did make great advances, what Strathclyde forgot to change was the 'fear culture' in the relationship (between EA & school). (EREO2).

East Renfrewshire believe that it needs to create a positive relationship based on closeness and consensus. Initially there were "no truly major changes" from that of Strathclyde. Changes related mainly to specific budget lines. However, within these

examples is the fact that teachers devolved salaries have changed from an average to an actual basis. This was presented by the officers in a straight-forward and uncontroversial manner. The head teacher noted this change but merely commented that it made her budget larger as she had an older staff. Yet, this policy was one of the defining features of early DMR, making it distinctively Scottish and 'avoiding the pitfalls of LMS'. In East Renfrewshire's political orientation and educational principles based on an entrepreneurial approach, the policy was gone with no great debate, no controversy and apparently no disruption to the education system and Scottish traditions. The counter argument may be that East Renfrewshire is in itself atypical in Scotland and too small a scale to threaten the nature of the national education system. It is unlikely that an EA with only twenty primaries and seven secondaries could create massive redundancies and industrial action. Nor was it likely that a small and arguably peripheral EA could be capable of generating a fundamental change in national discourse.

The scale and nature of East Renfrewshire contributed to other changes. Training was perceived as integral to DSM but may no longer be provided directly by the EA. The corporate and proactive nature of East Renfrewshire resulted in teachers perceiving DSM as becoming more integrated with other policies:

I suppose East Ren has got an overall picture of where it wants to go. So things like DSM are now tied within where they want curriculum to go and what they want done, and what courses they want people to go on. In the old Strathclyde, they had a much broader scheme, and you could come and you could choose in which direction you were heading.

In the above quote, there remains the implication of 'them' and 'us' and not an equitable 'partnership'. Within the pursuit of closeness, coherence and corporate drives, there is the potential perception of a centralisation occurring.

In North Lanarkshire, the DMR scheme had been reviewed:

when we were still a shadow authority, we decided that... DMR would need to be changed. Not in any drastic way because it's worked very, very well... But I think it was in place by that time for 4 years, 3- 4 years, so it would have been

due for review anyway... mainly because there were operational details... there were too many budget lines... need to review the consultative procedures... virement orders... back in January, we set up a working group which was chaired by... the Senior Depute, with head teachers from Primary and Secondary and representatives from the trade unions and admin and finance assistants and representatives from school head office. And that group was set the task of looking at the existing DMR scheme and coming back and saying to us that needs re- worked. So we worked from January through 'til summer holidays... and we had a draft scheme on DSM. (NLEO1).

The draft scheme is perceived to embody a “more efficient” version of DSM that is “less bureaucratic” and emphasises consultation within schools. This scheme was provided as a consultation document and would become Council policy.

The scheme is “virtually... the same” as DMR and adopts the same computer and support systems. A final decision on the future use of ECSU had not been made. The Officers had considered other systems but perceived them as costly , believing that ECSU “is cheap and cheerful... it’s good value for money” .The main operational changes were due to the merging of two previous Divisions, Dumbarton and Lanark:

There’s a coming together of two different approaches to an extent. Approaches which are based on the same model, but are nonetheless operationally some minor differences. (NLSS1).

The situation was being resolved, but indicates that within Strathclyde a full consistency of approach across the Divisions had not been achieved. By contrast, North Lanarkshire was trying to create a more consistent and arguably centralised approach.

As with City of Glasgow, South Lanarkshire is keen to increase the nature of devolution:

what we’re really trying to look at is devolved management not just in the context of financial management, but devolved management in its widest possible sense. So that managers are empowered to take decisions that are appropriate to the level that they are operating at within the system... apart

from talking about that and explaining to managers that's one of our goals, we haven't really started to operationalise that in anyway yet. (SLEO1).

This last statement is surprising given that for 1st April 1996, South Lanarkshire had produced its own detailed scheme of DMS. Despite greater detail and some changes in procedure: "the South Lanarkshire one is broadly based on the Strathclyde one", as a key author of each is the same person. Nevertheless, the South Lanarkshire scheme is intended to "develop and change with experience". One must question whether there is a conflict between creating a detailed practical scheme without working through the underlying principles.

The essential difference thus far relates to the support structure. A devolved management services team has been created with a lead Officer who is responsible to a Finance Services Manager with overall authority. For the day- to- day running of DMS, the Devolved Management Services Officer is supported by AFOs and a clerical assistant who operate a 'help desk' to which schools can phone with queries. The officers believe the system has advantages as it pulls on the combined expertise of the different individuals, provides a "consistent approach, a standard within the service" and overcomes the previous problem of schools being left without cover. However:

The users of our support service were a little reticent I think because it was a change in procedure. I think they're now quite happy. (SLEO2).

As with North Lanarkshire, there was a perceived need to develop a more "standard approach" where support staff from the previous Divisions had different procedures and approaches. The other important changes were giving greater powers over appointment procedures and trying to encourage an improvement in accounting procedures at school- level. A standardised and managerial approach was being advocated.

Head teachers were concerned that detailed prescription were undermining their managerial autonomy:

I think that there has been some re- interpretation or whatever of some of the budget headings. And that doesn't square very well with financial management.

There were concerns that the search for standard procedures was in fact the creation of a centralised approach:

it is probably just something that is the mark of the new Authority clarifying what they want these lines for... But with closeness of monitoring can come a threat of bureaucracy, and a slowing down, an inefficiency, inflexibility. You can only vire the money if you get approval from someone, is different from saying you've got a scheme of delegation which says you can vire the money as long as you don't overspend it... There's more a kind of central hold of what we're doing, and not so much uniformity as conformity... There are procedures associated with managing a budget, if they become very detailed and carefully monitored at head quarters, we could become quite restricted... (this is a concern).

Against the Government's rhetoric of efficiency and decentralisation, there is school-level perception of increased inefficiency and centralisation.

Therefore, the former Strathclyde EAs are beginning to move away from the Strathclyde scheme. The situation of computer support has not been fully resolved. There are concerns that the benefits of flexibility and school-level 'freedom' may diminish due to budget constraints and the centralising tendencies of the smaller and newer EAs, despite advocacy of creating decentralisation. This may be a transitional phase as decentralisation or centralisation, or more likely a combination, are future possibilities.

Impact of Budget Cuts on DSM

DSM was affected by the climate of budget constraint. School budgets were not immune, even where no direct cut was implemented, mechanisms such as restricting virement and carry forward plus freezing budget lines were adopted across the EAs. Within former Grampian and Highland, where DSM was still being phased in, this process slowed. Within Strathclyde, it is the generally larger EAs, City of Glasgow,

North & South Lanarkshire, plus the affluent East Renfrewshire where DSM has not been especially affected. By contrast in the other authorities, budget cuts and constraints have been made. In some authorities, such as City of Aberdeen, management time has been stopped. Concerns centred on the capacity to support DSM, the level of budgetary freedoms and savings possible and consequently the detrimental impacts on DSM.

In Highland, Aberdeenshire and City of Aberdeen, there was a perceived inability to support adequately the new phases of DSM. An Aberdeenshire Officer explained:

One of the things that has happened and it was going to happen inevitably but the budget has forced it quicker, schools are going to have to learn to stand on their own two feet more. The support structures that the previous authorities had by management support, development officers, additional management time, etcetera, there is just not going to be the money for that.

While it was anticipated that established DSM schools would cope, there were concerns about the new schools coming onto DSM, plus the capacity of small rural schools to “ultimately survive on reduced budgets” (AEO2).

It was increasingly being perceived that DSM would involve the devolution of budget cuts. While some Officers regretted cuts but agreed with the need for devolved responsibility in all areas, head teachers were concerned:

there's just the general cutback in expenditure. We've lost £10 per pupil head and a variety of budget headings have been reduced. So basically, we're being asked to do the same job with less money. And that's always been a worry about DSM, and it's nobody's fault, was that it would allow whoever to give the schools responsibility for managing the cuts rather than being upfront and honest in terms of the whole Council. To a certain extent, that's what they've done. (HSS2).

The reasoning behind these comments are curious and replicate other quotes which suggest head teachers unwilling to directly attribute responsibilities. Unlike the individual thrust of markets and managerialism, the head teachers appeared to blame

'the system' and therefore adhered with the characteristics of a 'bureaucratic personality' (Hales 1993).

One head teacher was critical of the sources, economic constraint, centralised management and conflict between local and national policy, and outcomes of change:

it's a scheme of delegation with nothing basically. What in effect has happened to our budgets now, is that unless it is spent on that specific activity, we cannot spend it. So what you've effectively got is access to information in the school under a budget line. But it's basically Centrally controlled. The Centre is saying you can't spend it other than in this way. And we understand the rules for that because of the monetary crisis that the Council finds itself in...one of the effects of Reorganisation and budget constraint is a scheme of delegation become nothing more than an exercise in transparent accounting, at local institutional level. But really there is no ability to transfer things. So in a kind of perverse way the government policy on local government Reorganisation may undermine the Government's policy on delegated management. (A&BPS1).

In a period of limitations on budget lines, constraints on virement, lack of 'surplus' funds and an apparently centralist EA approach, many of the benefits of DSM dissolve. Furthermore, despite the common purpose of decentralisation, there are conflicts between Reorganisation and DSM, which may generate different practical outcomes than anticipated by the rhetoric of 'empowerment' and 'autonomy'.

Problems Identified with DSM

In the Phase 1 interviewing a range of problems relating to the practicalities and introduction of DSM were cited (see table 9. 3). Specific budget lines created problems in certain EAs, e.g. energy in Strathclyde and furniture in Grampian. There was concern in Highland as the Region intervened to 'pull back' the savings made by the school. Generally, primaries were having more problems in actually 'managing' DSM. Overall, less problems were identified in Strathclyde, although this does not indicate that no problems existed. It appeared that some problems could diminish over time and with experience. Hence, in the first phase of interviewing it was hoped that

these were initial 'teething' problems and DSM could be ameliorated. Some of the problems identified were not re-mentioned post- reorganisation, but notably these were issues to do with the initial set- up of DSM and the activities of the Region, e.g. 'lack of EA pre- planning'. However, some problems remained and appeared ongoing (see table 9.4). Furthermore, a list of problems emerged and/ or became particularly acute in the post- Reorganisation period, e.g. in lights of new EA policy or budget constraints (see table 9.5).

Table 9.3 Problems Identified with DSM Pre- Reorganisation

<i>Problems</i>	<i>Identified by Education Officer</i>	<i>Identified by Secondary HT</i>	<i>Identified by Primary HT</i>
Lack of EA pre-planning		GRCSS4, HRCSS1	GRCPS1, HRCPS3
Inadequate communication between levels	GRCEO2, HRCEO4		
Poor budget information from EA		GRCSS1 & 4, HRCSS1 & 2	GRCPS4, HRCPS1 & 2
Capacity for EA to reclaim school-savings		HRCSS1	HRCPS1 & 2
Potential to cut school budget		GRCSS3, HRCSS2, SRCSS1	SRCPS3
Inequitable- schools on different starting points treated same		GRCSS3, HRCSS2	GRCPS1, HRCPS2 & 3
Need more management time & less paperwork			GRCPS4, HRCPS3
Constraints on budget, i.e.. Min. Standards, ring-fencing		HRCSS2	HRCPS1
Managing staff budget			HRCPS2 & 3, SRCPS5
Property budget	HRCEO3	HRCSS2	GRCPS2
Cost of vandalism	HRCEO3		HRCPS2 & 3
Energy budget inappropriate		SRCSS2 & 3	SRCPS1
Furniture budget inadequate		GRCSS1	GRCPS2

Table 9.4 Problems Identified as Ongoing with DSM

<i>Nature of Problem</i>	<i>Identified by EOs</i>	<i>Identified By HTs</i>
Other LA Departments	HEO1, COAEO2	HSS1 & 2, COGSS1, APS2
LG. Finance System	HEO2	
Capacity for EA to Reclaim School Savings		HSS1
Budget Information		HSS1, COASS1
Cost of Community Education		COASS1, HPS1
Nature of Budget Lines		HPS2
Computer System		ASS1 & 2, COASS1, APS1
Need for Training	NLEO1	ASS1 & 3, NLPS1
Lack of Monitoring / Auditing	COAEO1	
Budgets that are Difficult to Devolve, e.g. SEN	COGEO2	
Issue of Health & Safety		COGSS1
AFA's Workload	NLEO1	COGSS1, NLSS1
Budget Headings that School Doesn't Control		SLPS1

Table 9.5 Problems Perceived as Emerging or Worsening Post- Reorganisation

<i>Nature of Problem</i>	<i>Identified By EOs</i>	<i>Identified By HTs</i>
Introduction of small schools with teaching heads	HEO1 & 4, AEO1	HPS2
Other LA Departments		HSS1
Inexperience of New EA	A&BEO1	HSS1, A&BSS1, COGSS1, NLSS1
Line management/ seniority		HSS1, SLSS1
Persistence of Bureaucracy		HSS1
Changes in Staffing Appointments Procedures		HSS1
Budget Constraint	HEO4, COAEO1 & 2, A&BEO1, COGEO1, EREO2	HSS2, ASS1,2 & 3, COASS1, NLSS1, SLSS1, HPS1, COAPS1, A&BPS1, NLPS1
Communication/ Lack of Information from Centre		COASS1, NLPS1, SLPS1, ASS1
Attempt to Centralise/ Co-ordinate Funds		A&BSS1

Slowness of Central Response/ Decision- Making		COGSS1
Computer System	EREO1 & 2	
Getting Used to New Procedures		NLPS1
In Former SRC, Reconciling Differences between Divisions	SLEO2	NLPS1
Reduced Flexibility	AEO1, COGEO2	HSS1 & 2, ASS1, COASS1, SLSS1, A&BPS1. COAPS1, SLPS1
Provision of Support	HEO1, AEO1, COAEO1	COASS1, HPS1, SLPS1
Loss of Economies of Scale	COAEO1	
Re- interpretation of Budget Lines		SLSS1

There remains an extensive list of problems and issues to be resolved with DSM. Many, predominantly technical/ practical, issues have been ongoing and not yet fully resolved. These ongoing problems are most prominent in the non- Strathclyde EAs, where DSM was introduced later and not as heavily financed and supported. Nevertheless, there is an additional extensive list of problems that have emerged post-Reorganisation across EAs. Some of these relate to the initial nature and experience of the new EAs compared to the old Regions, e.g. reduced economies of scale and inexperienced personnel. The most fundamental problem is budgetary constraint and this is recognised by officers and head teachers alike. This budget constraint has various 'knock on' effects, such as the capacity of Highland, City of Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire to support new schools coming on to DSM, or Argyll & Bute's attempt to centralise control of some funding. The most fundamental problem in terms of the principle and practice of DSM is that school- level flexibility has been severely reduced. This is a major issue as flexibility was the most appreciated benefit of DSM.

Benefits of DSM

Head teachers still perceived benefits with DSM, although there was a recognition that some 'freedoms' and increased budget levels had gone. However, the overall principle and practice of DSM was supported. As one head teacher explained:

I maintain the value of a devolved management system. It doesn't diminish as the budget diminishes. The quality of the service declines, there's no doubt about that. You put less money in, there's less quality back. But nevertheless the flexibility at local- level is still valuable, it hasn't been diminished.

The key benefits identified related to control over the budget and flexibility to target it to the schools' identified needs. These are the fundamental principles of DSM. However, this capacity is reduced if the budget levels are sufficiently constrained and controlled, by Central detailed procedures, that schools have little flexibility to save , move and target resources. As table 9.6 demonstrates when comparing the benefits espoused pre and post- Reorganisation from DSM, there has been a perceived diminution in the range and extent of benefits. Nevertheless, an additional overall benefit perceived across the schools and over time was the school's control over its budget and money, it was this fundamental 'benefit' which made DSM appear worthwhile.

Table 9.6 Benefits of DSM Pre- and Post- Reorganisation

<i>Benefit Identified</i>	<i>Identified by HTs Pre-Reorganisation</i>	<i>Identified by HTs Post-Reorganisation</i>
Savings generated at school- level	GRCSS1, HRCSS1, GRCPS1, HRCPS1	COASS1
Flexibility to target resources	GRCSS1, HRCSS1, SRCSS1, 2 & 4, GRCPS2 & 4, SRCPS1, 4 & 6	ASS1, NLSS1, SLSS1, HPS1, & 2, COGPS1
Carry- forward	GRCSS1, HRCSS2, GRCPS4, SRCPS6	HPS1
Virement	HRCSS3, GRCPS1	ASS1, HPS1
Central purchasing and school flexibility to use local firms	HRCSS2, SRCSS4, HRCPS1 & 3, SRCPS1 & 4	
Speed of ordering supplies, etc	GRCSS3, SRCPS1 & 6	HSS1, A&BSS1, APS1
Improved school environment	GRCSS1 & 4, HRCSS1 & 3, SRCSS1, 2, 3, 4 & 5, GRCPS2, 3 & 4, HRCPS1 & 3, SRCPS1, 3 & 6	HSS1, ASS2, HPS1 & 3, APS1, ERPS1
Improved staff morale/ sense of ownership	GRCSS4, HRCSS1 & 2, SRCSS3	HSS1
Increased cost- awareness at school- level	HRCSS1, 2 & 3	
Improved management styles and practices	HRCSS2	HSS1, A&BPS1
Control of staff budget	GRCSS1, 2 & 4, HRCSS2 & 3, SRCSS1, 4 & 5, GRCPS1 & 4, HRCPS1, SRCPS3, 4 & 6	COASS1, COGPS1, ERPS1
Staff Appointments procedure	HRCSS2, HRCPS3	
Control of property- related budget	GRCSS1, GRCPS1 & 4	GRCPS1 & 4

Fairer system	SRCSS5, HRCPS3, SRCPS3	HRCPS3, SRCPS3
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DSM and Teaching and Learning

What is conspicuously absent from the above tables is any direct reference to teaching and learning which arguably should be crucial to reform in the education system. Head teachers had to be prompted on this issue. A 'proven link' between DSM and improved teaching and learning could not be provided. However, for most heads there was an "intuitive feel" that DSM could, generally indirectly, improve teaching and learning, e.g. purchase of equipment, improvements to the school environment, improved management, an improved ethos, "happy teachers make happy kids", and a shift in culture. This argument was demonstrated by a head teacher who listed the resources purchased via DMR, including major refurbishment of rooms, classroom chairs and computers:

I would just say that all of these add up to improving the environment of the school to which the pupils come every day, and therefore helps them to feel: a) appreciated and b) hopefully encouraged to respond to their environment. But... you couldn't pick out a thing there and say now this led to twenty pupils passing their exam that they would not otherwise have passed, it's not as direct as that.

However, two primary heads suggested that DSM and associated reforms may impede improved teaching and learning by increasing teachers' paperwork and shifting the emphasis away from the quality of teaching and learning. However, this was a minority view, the majority of heads were supportive and 'hopeful' that DSM would bring benefits throughout the school.

Developing Perception and Overall Opinion of DSM

Some officers spoke of a reluctance among head teachers to introduce DSM at the outset and some resistance. Issues included a perception that school budgets would be cut and that head teachers were not trained to be accountants. However, resistance decreased with experience of DSM. An officer commented: "I don't think schools necessarily welcomed it, but on the other hand I think that schools thought themselves into it".

Secondary head teachers in Strathclyde and Highland were keen to be involved in the first phase of DSM. In Strathclyde, there was a feeling that the scheme was “well thought out” and heads were interested and reasonably enthusiastic. In Highland, one head was “delighted” to be in the pilot as there were benefits of being “in at the vanguard of it”. While another welcomed DSM as professionally- challenging. Although there was concern that DSM would be a means to cut school budgets. By contrast, the secondary heads in Grampian were concerned about DSM. One head explained: “I don’t think the Region had themselves in a state of readiness for implementation” .There was a general feeling that DSM was a ‘step into the unknown’ and was difficult to come to terms with in the first year. Therefore, initial reactions ranged from enthusiasm to apprehension. In the primary sector, there was a mixture of reactions also. Most heads in Strathclyde were interested knowing the pilot would be supported but waiting to see what lay ahead. However, the primaries were involved by virtue of being feeders of selected secondaries, as they had not been directly consulted one head’s reaction was “oh good grief no”. In Grampian, there were mixed feelings also but generally support. One head explained she was “not frightened” as she had knowledge of accountancy!. By contrast, all heads interviewed in Highland were anxious and increasingly apprehensive due to the Region’s handling of the issue. There was a lack of information and the Region cutback the number of pilot schools, increasing feelings of concern amongst remaining pilots. The introduction of DSM was perceived as “hard- going”, especially alongside the introduction of 5- 14. Therefore, the primary sector appeared generally more concerned, but most were prepared to ‘give it a go’. With developing experience, the vast majority of head teachers was positive and wished to retain DSM. As one commented:

I would think there are more pluses than minuses. It gives us much more flexibility. We can do things which we couldn’t do before. We can make decisions which we couldn’t do before. We’ve got money which we hadn’t got before, which we can move around... equally you could get yourself into an awful lot of hot water. (GRCSS2).

Most heads welcomed DSM, perceived benefits but wanted also the continued existence and support of the EA. However, there were differences between the sectors and EAs.

All of the above influenced the overall opinion. Fundamentally, DSM is recognised as a tremendous change with implications throughout EAs and schools:

I think DSM is the biggest change in management that we have seen in one hundred years just about. That strengthened the role of the head teacher, allied with the school board. And that made a big, big difference. And it's changed the role of educational administrators... And I'm not really sure that...Departments of the Council have ever fully appreciated what devolved management fully means. Architects for example will say 'do you know what that head teacher has gone and done and he's done this. You should go and tell him to stop it'. And I say 'well, I'm sorry it's devolved management and that's it, they get on with it'. Now there is a learning curve of course for head teachers... But if he chooses A instead of B, he's free to choose A instead of B. It's our job to ensure that whatever his choices are, there is a good quality education coming out the establishment. And that's the measure at the end of the day. Not whether he buys a photocopier from the wee shop down the road or buys it from the Council's contract. And people are finding that difficult to accept. (HEO1).

This quote captures many of the issues and dilemmas with DSM. It is a huge change but one that must be realised over time, developed and pervade throughout the education and local government systems. The full implications are not fully realised, and sometimes resisted, by non- educational officers and politicians. Similarly, a balance has to be struck between local discretion and central oversight, which can create central intervention. Each EA can influence this balance of school and EA level responsibilities, e.g. through the detail of the Scheme of Delegation or procedures operationalised. Even within the most decentralist EA, important and pervasive EA roles and powers remain, fundamentally ensuring the adequacy and nature of education within their area. DSM does not equate with school- level 'freedom' nor 'autonomy' but rather 'flexibility' within a variable but pervasive EA 'framework'.

The head teachers interviewed perceived DSM to be “worthwhile” as “it was a major opportunity for schools to get rid of quite a lot of the straight- jackets that there were previously” and to target resources to the schools’ needs. One head teacher espoused the overall benefits that were similar in many schools:

It has certainly been worthwhile. There’s absolutely no doubt about it. We benefit a lot from the flexibility its given the school. It certainly allowed the school to address the needs of the school. And we would never have been in such a strong position resource- wise if we hadn’t been in the first phase... The staff certainly are motivated by it... Altogether over two years, maybe £50,000 has been redirected in the school in various areas. Not to mention other savings from energy and repair and maintenance budgets. The school is in a better position. Every classroom in the main building and most of the out-buildings have had their basic furniture replaced...And they were all 25 years old... And they would have been here for another 25 years. Because it was impossible to get money for things from elsewhere. But it has been very easy under devolved management. So staff have seen big benefits. (COASS1).

With varying levels of enthusiasm, the general consensus is: “I would absolutely loathe to go back, I think in the old days when all I did was order textbooks and pencils”.

Although head teachers perceived many benefits with DSM, there was a perception and concern that many of these were being eroded and diminishing over time:

It’s been worthwhile overall. But I am finding that the management power that I’ve been given has been squeezed. And in each of the years it has been squeezed a little bit more. I mean initially it was the money we were arguing about. Now it’s the ability to make decisions about getting your property improved. It’s about decisions over the staff you appoint... What we’re finding here is devolved management in name only... that’s just a paper transaction. And now they’re ...cutting where we did have the ability to transfer funds from one heading to another. They’re cutting that ability every year. And that’s the frustration. (HSS1).

DSM never fully achieved the grand rhetoric on which it was promoted, 'freedom', 'empowerment', but there was increasing concern about its lack of realisation:

The problem, the big worry... is that it will become devolved administration, rather than devolved management... But doing it in a situation where resources are declining quite dramatically in some areas, gives you very few of the benefits and all the problems of DEM.... that gives you a negative feeling, although I'm very positive in theory. (ASS1).

Another head teacher argued the balance between workload and benefits associated with DSM was now becoming extremely close. In practice, decentralisation can become a means of 'de-concentration', i.e. removing work from the Centre, rather than the devolution of real power. In the development of DSM, there were concerns that this possibility was becoming stronger. Nevertheless, that there was some capacity for local control over school budget, flexibility for decision-making and the potential to target resources to schools' needs was the redeeming feature of DSM. Current DSM may not be as good as 'the good old days' of pilot DSM, especially in Strathclyde, but it was perceived as significantly better than the 'bad old days' of pre-DSM.

Future Development of DSM

There are a number of practical issues to be resolved with future DSM, e.g. computer system, support and details of procedures. There is a need also to develop a 'culture of DSM' which pervades the education and local government systems. Officers and head teachers were generally aware of these issues. Other suggestions included providing financial management within general teacher training, reforming local government finance to enable long-term budgeting, deriving appropriate formulae for local needs and developing the nature and use of IT. In the former Grampian EAs, the head teachers remained strongly in favour of a cheque-book system. This would not necessarily devolve any more money but would increase flexibility to spend without the constraints of set budget lines, virement limits and carry-forward problems at the end of the financial year. A few head teachers argued for greater devolved powers per se:

The bottom line is the key word in this DSM thing is devolved. And I would say devolve it and let us get on with it, make us accountable... And it's caused us more work because we've had to hand certain things back to other officials in the authority. So it's given us an increased workload. But if they devolved more and interfered less, I think they might find an improved educational service. They would get a better service for the same price. Efficiency, I reckon is there for the taking, if they put the responsibility closer to the front-line delivery. (HSS1).

This is a controversial view. While everyone realised that DSM needed to develop and practical issues required resolution, many heads, especially in the primary sector, felt that the current levels of devolution were 'about right'. The notion of a free market and individualism in education were not pervasive, rather the collective protection and support of an EA 'framework' were popular. This influenced the policy, perception and practice of Reorganisation and the education function also.

Reactions to Proposed Reorganisation of Local Government

The transitions to Reorganisation held another potential challenge and change to the roles of schools and EAs and their relationship. Amongst phase one interviewees, there was recognition that the two-tier system of local government contained problems, such as lines of communication, 'duplication of bureaucracy' and confusion. There was a hope that such problems would be overcome and a new 'localness' may emerge from Reorganisation. However, the overwhelming opinion was that Reorganisation was an unwelcome and unnecessary policy, based on misjudged political manoeuvring and with costly implications for the reorganisation and replication of services.

The Strathclyde interviewees spoke of the perceived benefits of Strathclyde and the potential problems associated with its abolition. Head teachers spoke with great affection about Strathclyde and perceived themselves as 'Strathclyde schools':

I'm a believer in Strathclyde... no Authority will be able to provide the equivalent level of services; I know it sound corny, proud to be a school in Strathclyde.

Nine of the heads interviewed strongly regretted the prospect of Strathclyde being abolished, while the remaining two stressed Strathclyde's positive attributes. Only one head perceived the scale of Strathclyde as a problem, the rest perceived positive benefits from Strathclyde's 'largess' - economies of scale, purchasing power, and budget redistribution. Specific policies from Strathclyde were strongly supported, e.g. equal opportunities, social strategy, special needs and tackling deprivation. Concern was expressed as to whether these would demise with Strathclyde. One officer commented:

Head teachers would appear to be happy with the kind of relationship that they have with Strathclyde, and or anxious to see something similar or better continuing in the new authorities. (SRCEO1).

This appeared true and many of the Government's criticisms of Strathclyde, e.g. it was too large, too remote, not local, lacked loyalty, were argued to be inaccurate.

In Grampian, opinion was more mixed. According to officers, Grampian was a 'good sized' Region, therefore even if unitary status was to be created the boundaries should be retained intact. One of the head teachers held a particularly strong dislike for the two-tier system, "we now serve two sets of masters", and therefore 'welcomed' Reorganisation. In both Grampian and Strathclyde, the head teachers that were least bothered by Reorganisation were older believing that the Regions were not necessarily an improvement on the old 'Shire' system to which they were returning in effect. However, in Grampian, the disruption created by transition to Reorganisation had resulted in many head teachers being "glad to see the back of Grampian... they are like rats deserting a sinking ship" :

In some ways I just wish ... Reorganisation was over, and we were into the next stage so that we could get back to knowing who people are, what they're doing. To be honest, I think the change-over's been terrible. (GRCPS4).

The ultimate transition to Reorganisation had in some ways soured Grampian's image.

In Highland, officers believed that as it was "not being carved up", there would be "less problems with the transition to unitary status than elsewhere" and that there would not be disruptions in service. However, head teachers were disgruntled by the

upheaval of Reorganisation: "It's just a nightmare. And I mean this is an Authority that isn't actually changing". There was a belief that the education service had been adversely affected:

Reorganisation has created problems and upheaval... part of the present problems are due to the changes of staff within the Authority due to Reorganisation. As a consequence things are being put on the back-burner, and issues are not being properly addressed... can't contact people we're familiar with... issues are being dropped in the DSM Steering Group. (HRCPS2).

Given the expectation of continuity in Highland, the reality of upheaval and discontinuity was perceived negatively and officers were 'blamed' for creating problems.

The majority of interviewees wanted the education service to develop post-Reorganisation, for improvements to be made where necessary but for change to be minimal in many respects. Constraints on local government budgets preceded Reorganisation, but there was a general perception that the cumulative impact of cuts, the devolution of budgets to schools and the cost of Reorganisation would result in greater constraint and cuts directly at the school-level, whereas previously schools tended to be 'cushioned' by the EA. Generally, the extent and implications of budget cuts were not fully known during my first phase interviewing. However, in Highland it was hoped that budgetary restrictions would affect Education less than elsewhere given that their Reorganisation was not as extensive. In Grampian, there was a recognition that budget cuts would affect schools. Similarly, in Strathclyde the prospect of cuts loomed large, although the extent to which it would affect schools varied between prospective unitary authorities. The schools going into the affluent East Renfrewshire and large South Lanarkshire believed that they would be relatively unscathed. Whereas in the other areas there was concern, especially in the City of Glasgow, urban and deprived, and the small rural Argyll & Bute and South Ayrshire. Schools were frustrated that their budgets would be cut when there are increasing public and political expectations about education.

In areas where budget cuts were anticipated, it was believed that the education service would suffer. Predictions that only statutory services and the core curriculum would be provided were offered. There was a worry about cuts in the number of teachers, reduction in teaching standards and increasing class sizes. There were concerns that support services, non-core activities and school places would be subject to review. Indeed, in the run up to Reorganisation, decisions were increasingly being made around these areas. In terms of support services, in Strathclyde, the Educational Development Service, Quality Assurance Unit, and Staff College were all to be dismantled. In the other Regions, development work, the advisory service and staff training were posited as areas for cuts. Concern was expressed also about the levels of support for special educational needs and the psychological services. In Strathclyde, there was concern that the reduced scale of the new EAs would diminish economies of scale and buying power. Some non-core educational activities in Strathclyde and Grampian were to be undermined or stopped in the prospective EAs, e.g. the disbanding of the Strathclyde Schools' Symphony Orchestra, no swimming and ending free musical tuition. Actual school closure was a concern to six heads interviewed, with those in the City of Glasgow, City of Aberdeen, North Lanarkshire and Aberdeenshire particularly concerned¹¹. The prospect of industrial action over teachers pay and conditions was mooted, while the 'carrot of opting out' was considered increasingly relevant.

There was a general concern that the opportunities of Reorganisation to develop an appropriate education service would be missed. There was a worry that some of the former Strathclyde EAs would rush to dis-associate themselves from Strathclyde for political reasons. The potential to 'throw the baby out with the bath-water' was deemed great. Some of the heads entering the smaller EAs were concerned that an excessively centralised and standardised approach would be enforced. Potential losses in terms of the policy, practice, operation, services and ethos of the education service were predicted. Nevertheless, there was hope that a reformed and re-invigorated education service would emerge with benefits. It was hoped that the small scale would bring schools and EA closer together. That the EA would be increasingly responsive to the needs of schools. Improved communication and the development of

consultation were hoped for. Consequently, some improvement in the quality of the education service may be promoted. Finally, it was suggested that 'new faces' and a 'fresh approach' may make a positive difference. Schools were generally concerned that the education service should improve and looking to their new EA to determine its relative merits and potential.

The Existence of a Future 'Education Authority'

Some interviewees believed that the Government's intention was to eradicate EAs. Under the terms of the Local Government Act 1994, the statutory requirement for a Director of Education (DoE) and associated Department of Education and Education Committee was removed. However, amongst my interviewees, there was majority opinion that a DoE, with an educational background, should be appointed and the associated Department of Education and Education Committee were vital. Education was perceived as a crucially important service affecting present society and future generations. The scale of the education service and its cost merited special attention. Furthermore, given the perceived public nature of education, a democratic element was essential through local government responsibility, not via school boards only. It was believed that the DoE was vital to provide leadership, understanding of education, educational vision, inform Members, represent schools and 'fight the corner for education'. To this end, it was believed that someone who had worked his or her way through the education system would have greatest understanding:

need someone with experience of the education service at the top- level... schools are strange and unique... full of idiosyncrasies and stuck in a time warp. Therefore, you need to be in the system to understand it. (GRCPS3).

Somebody who has been through the system understands the realities of what can and cannot work. As opposed to perhaps some people who might be superficially attracted by the band wagon notions of politically convenient or correct approaches to things (SRCSS3).

There was an assumption also that the role of DoE had been established by historical precedent and was a tradition to be maintained. The DoE was perceived as 'professional', 'skilled', 'knowledgeable' and therefore commanding support and respect.

The notion of 'generic management' was not popular:

There is no way that head teachers would want someone who did not have a background in education to tell them what to do. Say for example, that you have a local executive whose training is as an accountant, head teachers would not accept what he had to say, other than perhaps advice on budgetary details. But how could an accountant tell a head teacher who is earning £40,000, running a school with over 1000 pupils and a large budget, what to do, how to implement the 5- 14 programme. But that, of course, is the whole problem when you get the idea of the 'generic manager', you end up with a situation like what has happened in the health service, and that has been a disaster. There was a failure to distinguish the role of the generic manager, as opposed to the professional and specialist manager, which is necessary for education. (HRCEO1).

Head teachers spoke of the differences in assumptions, perspective and language when they dealt with non- educational officers. They were keen to maintain an 'educational' DoE with education as sole responsibility. Education was 'about more than money' and therefore should not be run by accountants or businessmen.

A minority of interviewees supported the need for a DoE but not necessarily from an education background. One of the most vociferous respondents had a vested interest, as he was an accountant appointed as an education officer with aspirations to Director status:

I don't think you necessarily need to have a teacher as the Director of Education. But certainly I feel as though I could make as good a job running an Education Department as anybody else... if you need expertise then you would have an educationalist, maybe as a Depute or something like that...I think that what you need is somebody with good management skills to take forward the Department.

Only two head teachers saw the possibility of a non- educational Director, however they stressed that such a person would need to develop understanding of education and crucially teaching and learning, and promote 'educational vision'. One head teacher believed that historical precedent did not mandate the need for a DoE.

Nevertheless, he emphasised that he “wouldn’t have wanted someone who was some kind of businessman coming into education”. The majority of interviewees believed that the lack of a DoE would ‘devalue’ and alter the education service.

Only one other head teacher pondered whether a different system would be preferable:

...would we be any worse off without a Director of Education, and a whole Directorate up there?... it’s a plate of spaghetti in terms of lines of accountability. And there’s something not unattractive about simplifying that... could somebody not start from scratch and say let’s forget what we did in the past.

This head believes that the new Authorities are unlikely to accomplish such a task, as Councillors are generally reactive. Nevertheless, his main suggestion is to abolish the Directorate and use the money to increase head teachers’ salaries to encourage responsibility and accountability at these levels. This would suit some heads better than others, favouring the ‘manager’ vision of head teacher. It leaves unresolved how the various other roles and functions identified for EAs would be organised and executed.

Structure of the New ‘EAs’

In the event, contrary perhaps to the Government’s intention, all the fieldwork authorities appointed a specific DoE with an educational background as head of an education department, supported by an average of three to five Assistant Directors, generally re-named Heads of Service, with a variable number of lower levels of support staff. The remits of the Heads of Service were generally connected to specific policies and functions¹² (See Appendices N-S). Lean central organisation was perceived advantageous. Smaller EAs tended to fare better in this respect, a City of Aberdeen officer explained:

Much smaller Directorate... We’ve gone for single figures. We’re the leanest centralised administration compared to any other Education Department in Scotland. This means people will have much more flexibility, will have to be much busier, people will have to be very, very clear about priorities and

responsibilities and where they lie. And that's partly true of head teachers as well.

The same scenario was expressed in East Renfrewshire. By contrast Argyll & Bute EA has a relatively large central administration, with five Heads of Service. Consequently, head teachers here complained about the size and cost of central bureaucracy perceiving it as worse than Strathclyde. A small central administration was perceived as a virtue across the authorities, but was not simply related to the overall scale of the EA but also the political choices of the council and preferences of the DoE, e.g. as in the above EAs and in the largest EA, City of Glasgow, which has a Directorate of eight:

It is one of the smallest in Scotland. In recognition of the fact that we are serious about devolving... North Lanark has nine Directorate for half the size, South Lanark has about eleven for half the size, North Ayrshire which is a quarter of the size has five Directorate. We are very tight. But it's a recognition, partly of our finance, but also of the fact that we should be running smaller teams if we are expecting heads to take on more of a role.

The configuration of the new EAs depended upon opportunities, choices and constraints.

The extent to which Reorganisation provided an opportunity to enact a radical reform of the local government education function was generally under-developed and varied between the EAs. According to the phase one fieldwork, DSM was a potentially pervasive change in the education system that may have benefited from alterations in the education structure. Yet, only a substantial minority of officers post-reorganisation had considered this issue, in City of Glasgow's general approach to a decentralised system and City of Aberdeen's review of the entire education function. In the other EAs, as DSM was 'in place', it was not an issue when deciding on how to reorganise the education service, rather pressures of time and budgets were driving factors.

The timing of change was similar across the EAs. The DoE was appointed around August 1995 and operated largely on their own until late 1995/ early 1996 when some

other staffing appointments were made and finally, the full Department of Education in terms of staffing and working order did not occur until March / April 1996. This time- scale and procedure placed limitation on the amount of ground- work that could be done pre- Reorganisation as evident in Aberdeenshire, Argyll & Bute, North and South Lanarkshire¹³. In Highland, radical reform of the education system was not considered and things continued as close to previous practice as possible, with the exception of changes at Divisional level, abolition of Districts and budget pressures. Nevertheless, some former Strathclyde EAs attempted to ameliorate what were perceived as previous weaknesses and create a more appropriate structure. In North Lanarkshire, altering the education structure was given priority:

So the structure's sort of influenced by the previous Authority... I was saying we've got a chance to change this now. Also perhaps in terms of the grouping together of remits, where in the past certain combinations seemed not to be successful. And we did make an effort to be a lean structure. (NLEO1).

What was perceived as the positive contribution of a 'school board officer' in Strathclyde was adapted in creating a Parent Officer, plus a Parent's Consultative Groups and local meetings. In City of Glasgow, for mainly pragmatic reasons, related to the city's population, surplus capacity and budgetary constraints, a 'task-force' to develop the city's education service was created. While in East Renfrewshire, political decisions advocated an 'enabling' model for the Education Department where services would be contracted. These shifts resulted in inter- related structural and policy changes.

In contrast to perceptions of constraint and inability to 'stand back' and 'think through' the nature of the future education service in some EAs, officers in City of Aberdeen did just that. The DoE adopted a "clean sheet approach". Before April 1996, the education department's roles were "defined" and appropriate officers recruited to "fit" remits:

But it's worth doing. Because if you don't do it then, you never actually get round to doing it properly at all. And anything you do from then on will be piecemeal... we had a session for all the Directors of Education in Scotland... and a number of these Directors came up to us and said we missed an

opportunity there, we are now having to think along these lines. But we had an opportunity. (COAEO1).

As early as November 1995, City of Aberdeen published a list of “operating principles”¹⁴ (Aberdeen City Council 1995). The resulting redefinition of roles and relationships attempts to bring the EA and the schools closer together, e.g. head teachers sit on the EA’s management group and have responsibility for decision-making also, hence:

the head teachers are basically officers of the authority, they just happen to be based more locally than we do. We are trying to bridge that gap between central management, central support and the managers of the schools out there. So that role means a close relationship with them... we aim to have as little as possible between us, between decision- making and the front- line services.

In the City of Aberdeen, the officers seized the ‘opportunity’ to redefine and reform the education function in accordance with the needs of a smaller and more cohesive EA.

By contrast in South Lanarkshire, there was the perception that the ‘opportunity’ to be pro-active had been ‘missed’. Although there had been some consideration pre-Reorganisation about structure, an officer explained this was insufficient:

We’ve put the thing in place and we haven’t consulted properly with people... that comes back to haunt you, because you actually spend more time cleaning up the mess afterwards, than if you had done the consultation properly in the beginning. So there’s things about having to do things in a rush and getting it wrong.

The political decision was to have an Education Department that was a direct service provider making the structure large and vital. Subsequent political decisions resulted in further structural changes, which were causing frustration and confusion for head teachers.

The structures of the EAs as of 1st April 1996 were unlikely to be permanent. The City of Aberdeen perceived itself as a “learning organisation”, where ‘ongoing development’ would be necessary and vital. To varying degrees all the EAs were

undergoing transition and development and would continue to do so over their lifetime, in light of experience, pragmatic factors such as budget levels, shifts in education policy and political decisions.

The Corporate Local Authority

One way in which the organisation and structure of the EA was changing was in relation to the other local authority Departments. In the majority of the EAs, a more corporate approach was popular with members but less so with officers. Only in Argyll & Bute and North Lanarkshire did it appear that a corporate approach was not being developed for Education. The drives to a corporate approach emerged from various factors: firstly, the practical impact of CCT and budget cuts making a corporate approach more attractive (Aberdeenshire and City of Aberdeen); secondly, members politically committed to developing a corporate approach (Highland, Aberdeenshire, East Renfrewshire and South Lanarkshire); thirdly, corporate working may be appropriate in a small, lean central structure (East Renfrewshire); and finally, a corporate approach in terms of policy outputs for the locality may be advantageous, e.g. tackling deprivation (City of Aberdeen, City of Glasgow). Generally, it is the latter strategy which is most accepted as it does not necessarily entail a pervasive corporate approach in all the workings of Education, but rather only on certain policy initiatives. There is a general acceptance that in some areas a corporate approach is beneficial, but that overall Education has certain distinctive features and must have priority for education officers¹⁵. There remains an assumption that the Education Department should retain its traditional, arguably, superior status within local government given its share of the Council budget and relative importance. Education remains perceived, by those in its employment, as 'first among (un)equals'.

Schemes of Decentralisation

All Councils were to prepare a Scheme of Decentralisation by 1st April 1997. At the time of interviewing, Highland was the most advanced being "the First in Scotland... one year ahead of the Government's timetable" and becoming operational from 1st April 1996 (Highland Council 1996). In South Lanarkshire, East Renfrewshire and Argyll & Bute the Scheme had been determined and was beginning to be

implemented. In the remaining EAs, the Scheme was still to be determined. In all the EAs, there were concerns about the Scheme's impact on Education. It was generally perceived that the Education service was already decentralised via schools and DSM, therefore the Scheme of Decentralisation was unnecessary and inappropriate. Tensions between core, area and school were emerging or predicted. Indicative perhaps of the general disjunction between the nature of the education service and the Council's Scheme of Decentralisation was the fact that in no Authority would the area structure, determined by the Scheme, fully accord with Education's area structure. The only exception being the City of Aberdeen, where Education has no area structure, consequently the Scheme would create an unwanted "additional tier of management" destroying the principle of single-tier management.

Highland is the most committed to Decentralisation perceiving it as a means to reorganise and revitalise the Council without the fragmentation created by unitary status. Eight Area committees have been created, for Education two are merged, each of which is serviced by an Area Education Manager. However, the Education Convenor stated publicly that the prime means of decentralisation in Education was to be through DSM and school boards. Consequently, many of the problems and concerns about Schemes of Decentralisation have emerged in Highland and are being re-iterated throughout the other authorities. The Area Education Manager is struggling to find issues for which he is responsible and more generally tensions are emerging between the different layers of schools, area and centre. This is evident also in South Lanarkshire, but interpreted in a different way, by a head teacher who has difficulty understanding what the function and authority of the Area manager is. The head teacher referred back to Strathclyde precedent and basic rules of bureaucracy whereby salary equates with status, hence he cannot accept that the Area Manager who is earning less than him and has perhaps not succeeded through school-level promotion is now supposedly his line manager. There remains a strong bureaucratic perception in education and where decentralisation is to arise it is believed to be within the existing structure not via additional appendages.

In the other authorities where the Scheme of Decentralisation is coming into operation, it has not been especially pervasive in terms of education. In East Renfrewshire, a member of Directorate attends Area meetings. In Argyll & Bute, a secondary head teacher had been invited to comment on the school's exam performances. The area committees are acting as a forum for local discussion, consultation and accountability, they are not major decision-makers. Most interviewees perceived that they should not be, and that "decentralisation... is a bit of a red herring" (COAEO1) for Education. There were concerns about the cost implications and that area committees may usurp powers from schools. There is a belief that the Scheme of Decentralisation may benefit some services but that Education should be treated distinctively.

Scale of EA (Strategic Capacity)

Before Reorganisation, there was a concern that the unitary authorities would be too small and strategic capacity would be lost. Some head teachers remained concerned; arguing a more 'medium' scale should have been found. However, the officers tended to stress that there were benefits to the scale of the new EAs. There remained an assumption that scale was important and that it was preferable to be in one of the larger rather than smaller EAs, evident in Highland and North Lanarkshire's claims about economies of scale, strategic planning, service provision and teacher opportunities¹⁶. Nevertheless, some of the 'smaller' EAs did not perceive their scale as especially problematic. The City of Aberdeen perceived benefits in the coherence of its nature making policy and practice easier. While East Renfrewshire believed that they were faring better than the larger authorities and had maintained services, especially as an 'enabling' EA in an affluent area. If scale, i.e. largess, was important, one officer argued that a Scotland - wide approach would be more appropriate:

Five million people, that's where you get the real economies of scale in terms of strategy that is going to be significant. The difficulty about large authorities is, it maybe have more capacity to think strategically, it may be better economies of scale and therefore more money, but it's more difficult to implement... coherently, because it's so big... we're interested in equity and consistency. (COAEO1).

As with the decentralisation issue in general, the question is not simply one of size and scale but also purpose and appropriateness.

Joint Arrangements

One method for overcoming the problem of providing services in smaller EAs is through joint arrangements, as advocated by the Government. However, in practice, these have not been significantly developed. Joint arrangements exist mainly for cross- boundary transfer of a child moving from primary to secondary (where these schools are now located in different EAs) and for specialist SEN provision (which always existed). The new EAs intended setting up their own provision, both to politically avoid co-operating with other authorities and to save money in the long term. The prevalence of these issues had resulted in the rapid diminution of any initial agreements, e.g. in the former Grampian, according to a now Aberdeenshire officer:

That's one thing that has and I think will disappear, any inter- authority co-operation... we had hoped to keep the Schools' Library Service running as a joint operation for a year. It's lasted six months. That's just politically, culturally, we are fundamentally different to the City. The City's Labour-controlled, centralist, things like this. And completely different philosophically... And we never hear of Moray now, they just do their own thing. So basically we will go our way, we will do our own things... Aberdeen City might as well be Dumfries & Galloway. It's quite sad really,... what it has done is fragmented what one could argue was a relatively coherent education service.

In the former Strathclyde authorities, certain joint arrangements had been negotiated pre- Reorganisation, however these were to last only two years and indications suggested may not be re- instated. For other functions within these authorities new individualised arrangements were being created, e.g. for SEN and Gaelic, and the largest EA, Glasgow's, attempt to 'sell services' had been relatively unsuccessful.

Differences in Policies Pre and Post Reorganisation

Changes in structure and approach may reflect or require shifts in policy, as indicated above. Budgetary issues have also affected and been affected by policy decisions. In

terms of specific policy differences between the old and new EAs, there is a variable and gradual shift with the old EAs' policies remaining generally intact in the transition.

When asked about differences between the old and new EA, head teachers frequently cited the shifts and losses in personnel, especially at 'area' level. Nevertheless, although individuals' positions may have altered, the bulk of personnel were 'recycled'. Some interviewees believed that this contributed to a continuation in policy:

a lot of the people who are in place were Strathclyde people. And as a result of that, they were brought up in the Strathclyde way and they are continuing with those policies at present. It may be that when they move on as people... retire, change jobs and so on, we may see certain things. (A&BSS1).

The extent to which the EAs were moving away from previous policies depended on personal factors, plus pragmatic arguments and political propositions. The exception was Highland where its predecessor policies were to be maintained relatively long-term.

The remaining EAs were undergoing varying and "gradual" shifts in policy. The Cities of Glasgow and Aberdeen were retaining the policies of their predecessors and underlying principles, but were seeking to adapt these principles and develop policies appropriate to their specific setting. Argyll & Bute anticipated they would go down such a route in the long-term, but in the short-term were keeping Strathclyde policies, due to workload, budgetary constraints and their apparently reactive approach:

I think our motto is don't fix it if it's not broken. When we get things that are broken, then we look at it, what's going on. (A&BEO1)

Although the head teachers in Argyll & Bute did believe change was occurring towards a more centralised and controlling regime - "a Stalinist state". In North Lanarkshire, Strathclyde's policies were accepted initially, but a subsequent programme of review, working groups and consultation was undertaken to develop policies that are more appropriate. These EAs were gradually developing and evolving from the previous EAs' policies.

However, some of the EAs were attempting to be different from the outset. Aberdeenshire proposed they would be philosophically quite a different EA, rejecting the discourse of markets and economic efficiency, instead advocating a collective and paternalistic approach. The head teachers commented on the new philosophy, which was manifest in a change in management style, which was welcomed. In stark contrast, East Renfrewshire is politically committed to an 'efficient' and 'enabling' EA and therefore rejecting Strathclyde's approach:

it's a Liberal- Democrat administration... but they have in their manifesto that they will run this leader administration on business lines.. an enterprise spirit... the Councillors will give us authority to charge for services and also to raise income... So we've got more freedom in suggesting ideas to Councillors than we've ever had before... And therefore we can spend that money on re-investing in the education service. Now that's very different from Strathclyde Region.

Despite being converse to the Aberdeenshire approach, this policy generally commanded support also as the council was prioritising and developing education through investment and policies, e.g. pre- five education, adult education and new building. Perhaps the support related to the political and cultural nature of the area, which historically has been right- wing. Whereas in comparison the attempt to introduce music charges to offset budgetary difficulties in predominantly Labour supporting North Lanarkshire met outcry.

South Lanarkshire were devising and implementing new policies. However, amongst the head teachers there was confusion as to their nature and implications:

I think it's true to say that South Lanarkshire in terms of policies and priorities have really tried to set their own and are therefore, to some extent, different from Strathclyde... it's to some extent a kind of vacuum... it's more a feeling of insecurity, it's intangible. (SLSS1).

The shifts in policy were perceived as problematic. As with the issue of structure in South Lanarkshire, there was concern that policy issues had not been properly thought through and the matter was worsened by poor communication to school- level.

The extent of change was generally limited but gradually evolving. For mainly pragmatic reasons, EAs had retained their predecessors policies initially. Sometimes these policies were supported also as key personnel in their original conception were now integral in the policy process of the new EAs. Some of the new EAs, supported the basic principles of their predecessor. Nevertheless, due to differences in philosophical and political approaches, shifts in the new EAs were occurring. It was possible for an EA to move toward the Conservative's espoused model of 'enabler', yet others were moving in decisively the opposite direction. Support for either policy depended upon the outcome for education, the communication of the policy and arguably the political and cultural traditions of the locality. A gradual shift to a range of 'types' of EA was beginning.

Impact of Budget Cuts on Education

Cutbacks and constraint pre- date Reorganisation, but the new authorities faced the legacy of a 'carry- forward' cut from their predecessor and the necessity to achieve 'new authority savings' also. Furthermore, in education there was the cost of ongoing developments and new policies, e.g. Higher Still and the Cullen Report¹⁷. Several EAs promoted themselves as being "worst affected" in Scotland, namely City of Aberdeen, City of Glasgow and Argyll & Bute. It was believed that the Government did not take sufficient account of the 'needs' of the area, e.g. urban deprivation in the former and island schools in the later, in their budgetary formula. There was concern that the drive to predominantly per capita funding would compound the problem. By contrast, the relatively large North and South Lanarkshire and affluent East Renfrewshire, where local taxation was perceived as a benefit, believed they fared relatively well.

In all the authorities, education budgets had been affected. However, in the majority of EAs, it had been protected to receive a smaller percentage cut than other Departments. This has a 'knock on' effect as the other proportionally smaller Departments have to absorb a larger percentage cut. In the specific education service, the impact of budget cuts varied, with some of the EAs, such as Highland, East Renfrewshire, North Lanarkshire and South Lanarkshire, trying to avoid actual cuts at school- level, e.g. by restructuring central administration. Common approaches were to reduce or charge for

non- statutory provision, e.g. music fees, closure of outdoor centres. Various budget lines at school- level were 'cash conserved', such as capitations. In Highland, teachers who were surplus lost jobs and in other EAs personnel levels were frozen, posts were left unfilled, while voluntary severance and early retirement were offered. Support services were reduced, e.g. psychological and advisory. In City of Glasgow and Argyll & Bute a programme of school closure was embarked upon but has been diluted due to public resistance and political objections. The budget situation generated certain policies and practical consequences, many of which are perceived as 'losses' to the education service.

Losses for Education Post- Reorganisation

Table 9.7 Perceived Losses For Education Post- Reorganisation

Area of Loss	Specific Issues
Personnel	Loss of advisors, educational psychologists, teaching posts, ancillary posts, Lack of experience amongst Members and Officers
Loss of Support Functions	Reduced support for SEN, Loss of support for curriculum, reduced monitoring, Support for deprivation
Provision & Nature of Services	No new nurseries, No swimming, Library service, Transport, Closure of schools, outdoor centres, Community Centres, Pre- Fives, Reduced quantity & quality of school meals, Free music tuition
Compared to Regional EA	No longer meet with large range of colleagues, Loss of strategic capacity, Less efficient structure, Worse communication, Loss of Strathclyde Regional Council
Nature of New EA	Too rural (Argyll & Bute), Levels of deprivation (Glasgow), Tax base is too small
Policies of new EA	Centralisation, Feeling of insecurity/ policy gap

(See appendix T for further details).

Many interviewees perceived that Reorganisation resulted in 'losses' for education. This issue is closely linked to budgetary constraint. More generally, there was 'loss' of expertise due to a reduction in personnel, especially area and specialist staff. There were 'losses' due to the relative inexperience of new officers and councillors and changing remits. There were losses linked to the provision of services, e.g. closure of community outdoor centres, and in the nature of services, e.g. erosion of free music tuition and reduced quality of school meals. There were perceived losses concerned with the nature of the new EAs versus the old Regions, e.g. the loss of Strathclyde,

strategic capacity and less efficient structure. Finally, there were specific losses relating to the policies of some of the new EAs, e.g. centralisation in Argyll & Bute and a 'feeling of insecurity' in South Lanarkshire. There were disadvantages associated with the particular boundaries and financing of some of the EAs, e.g. rural nature of Argyll & Bute and deprivation levels in City of Glasgow, in both cases the population base was perceived as too small and skewed to enable adequate local taxation revenue. Therefore, the losses related to the structure, financing, personnel, policies and capacity for provision of the new EAs - these are summarised in table 9.7.

Head teachers were more vocal than officers about perceived losses to the education service. There were general concerns, plus issues specific to certain EAs. Officers were critical of issues that could be attributed to Central Government's decisions concerning Reorganisation, e.g. the boundaries of City of Glasgow, and were linked to centrally imposed budgetary restrictions. By contrast, Officers did not voice any losses that were attributable to the policies of the new EA nor in comparison with the old EAs.

Benefits For Education Post- Reorganisation

Pre- Reorganisation the hope was that Reorganisation would improve the relationship between school and EA, with increased responsiveness, communication and consultation. These hopes remained post- Reorganisation and were beginning to be realised.

Most of the EAs introduced mechanisms and a managerial 'culture' attempting to encourage consultation. In Aberdeenshire, a consultation programme and working groups involving officers and head teachers was created. According to an officer, the aim was that "in the future the head teachers will probably feel more part of the firm than they ever did". The secondary heads agreed with this approach:

It's much more open, much more consultative... personable type of management. (ASS2); I think it's very encouraging. There is much more dialogue between the Directorate at the Centre and head teachers. (ASS1).

Similarly, in City of Aberdeen, the secondary heads were aware of attempts to create a “culture” of developing “a consensus view”. The perception was that “we are being listened to” and that the problems of communication associated with the two-tier structure were being ameliorated. However, there was less belief of the adequacy of consultation amongst the primary heads, who spoke of the working groups as being “rubber stamp Committees” and the contact being primarily through development planning, which is less close and personal. Therefore, consultation was being encouraged but favoured secondary heads.

In the former Strathclyde EAs, the creation of consultation and closer communication was being encouraged also. The City of Glasgow created ‘Area Forums’ involving school representatives in meetings with the DoE every six weeks. East Renfrewshire’s smallness encouraged the interaction of officers and head teachers, which was furthered by the ethos that head teachers “are involved not done to” (EREO2). This was welcomed by head teachers but involved increased workload. In North Lanarkshire, consultation and close communication was emphasised by officers and appreciated by head teachers:

We’ve certainly a very close working relationship with North Lanark Council. And consultation is very, very important to the Director... their team are involving head teachers and other colleagues in close discussion before they move forward on issues. (NLSS1).

Head teachers in all sectors had been involved in policy decisions, e.g. nature of Quality Development Service. In South Lanarkshire also, consultative working groups were created around policy areas. However, the membership of these groups was perceived by heads as “strange” as head teachers who were renowned for their expertise in certain areas were placed on different committees, indicating that the officers did not know the strengths of the heads nor the nature of their school. Consultation was perceived as “mixed” and not fully beneficial. Therefore the principle of consultation was being advocated across the EAs but realised differently in the EAs and sectors of schooling.

There were attempts to make officers 'closer' to schools. In the relatively small City of Aberdeen and East Renfrewshire with lean EA structures, the benefits of direct contact were espoused. In larger North Lanarkshire, officers were to have a local presence:

It's the old, you know the Tom Peters, 'the walk, the talk'. And we've tried hard to make sure now, that you've got an area role, be out in the school, be seen. I think that's been successful... also means that when we come to make decisions, you actually know what it's like in the reality of a school, you haven't spent the last three or four weeks sitting in here. (NLEO1).

Head teachers welcomed this closeness¹⁸. However, in South Lanarkshire, there were concerns amongst head teachers that there was no evidence of the "smaller, more personal touch"¹⁹. An Officer spoke of the benefits of "personal contact with teachers you can appreciate a bit more the problems they face". Nevertheless, she proceeded to argue that contact was mainly via local support staff and a telephone help desk. In some of the EAs, the close working relationship was to include politicians also, e.g. in City of Glasgow:

There's a more immediate link...than there was in Strathclyde where there was always an intervening tier. That's really to the good. Councillors should be closer to their schools... there's no passing the buck. So all that is very, very positive.

The principle of a close working relationship between councillors, officers and teachers was advocated, but there was contention over its level, nature and location.

Some Officers believed smaller EAs were advantageous. In City of Aberdeen, "there are considerable advantages in working in a small, coherent city". In East Renfrewshire, an 'enabling' model meant that small scale was beneficial:

so you hear a lot in local government Reorganisation about the small authorities not being able to survive. I would argue that the small will and the large wont.

Rather than money being redistributed as in Strathclyde, East Renfrewshire were able to target their monies to develop education.

The larger North Lanarkshire and City of Glasgow perceived there were some benefits in their predominantly homogenous nature also, enabling specific and pervasive policy to tackle deprivation and under-achievement. A North Lanarkshire Officer explained:

Raising achievement is our main aim. Because North Lanarkshire is the second most deprived authority in Scotland, only Glasgow has higher deprivation... We've adopted a motto of 'Aiming Higher'... people are doing very well, but we are going to try and do even better... there's a feel-good factor in our schools among the head teachers, they feel we are all in this together and it is going well.

There are linkages in the benefits between closer relationships, improved communication, developing consensus and a coherent policy appropriate for the area.

In the majority of EAs, some benefits could be perceived due to Reorganisation. Officers tended to be more vocal about these, whereas head teachers often had to be directly questioned, rather than volunteering information. Some of the EAs, such as City of Aberdeen, East Renfrewshire and North Lanarkshire, were progressing and developing more smoothly than others. In the remaining EAs, notions of closeness, communication and consensus were being advocated and aspired to, but frequently remained as 'possibility' and required further development and time to be realised. The only EA where no real benefits of Reorganisation were discerned was Highland. However, this is not entirely negative as it was argued that the benefits of the old Region remained, e.g. a close working relationship and benefits of scale. Nevertheless, in all authorities the benefits prevalent were not as pervasive as Government rhetoric proposed. There was a fundamental belief also that the key benefit would be to strengthen the relationship between EA and school, which is arguably counter to the Conservatives' agenda of 'fragmentation', 'individualism' and market forces. The benefits must be considered alongside the list of 'losses' perceived, plus the cost and upheaval of Reorganisation.

Was Reorganisation Necessary?

The overall opinion is very strong that Reorganisation was unnecessary, politically motivated and extremely costly to the detriment of Education. Only two Officers could find any merit in Reorganisation arguing that for some central services and those that were split between District and Region, there may be benefits. Also, for the public a “one- door approach” may be beneficial. But the impression was these officers were being charitable and overall agreed that for Education, “it was a shambles”.

Head teachers voiced preference for their old EA with its known way of working, economies of scale and specific policies. Head teachers perceived that Highland was working well and that Reorganisation created no real benefits. Grampian was perceived as a ‘good size’ which was “broken up... for no reason”, resulting in losses: “ it was healthier to be part of...larger body...I thought that was good... That’s gone”.

In Strathclyde, the continuing theme was:

Strathclyde was doing particularly well... Strathclyde was the only one that could do so many things, special needs, because of its budget and size, its ability to move funding around and so forth... So that’s certainly a loss.

The irony being perceived that Strathclyde was becoming most efficient and effective at the time when its abolition was announced. Although some head teachers were willing to believe that benefits may emerge and old problems be ameliorated, they believed that the Regional EAs held many benefits and Reorganisation was unnecessary.

The rationale for Reorganisation was perceived as a “political mistake” (SLPS1). Anger was expressed at the political nature and in particular the cost implications:

This Reorganisation has cost millions and the money has to come from somewhere. So whilst we in Education are going to be affected, we are being affected as individuals, as citizens. It’s affecting everything. It has cost millions. Frank Pignatelli earned £96,000 a year as Director of Education. We now have twelve Directors of Education earning something in the region of £56,000.... but twelve times £56,000 is a heck of a lot more than £96,000. And

that is only one Director of the Education Department, if you take the Director of Social Work, the Director of Roads, whatever. It has to have cost millions. And the money has had to come from somewhere. And we will have to take our share of it. (NLPS1)

The above argument was made by many head teachers, it was developed also to a belief that the “money could have been better used” (NLSS1):

I think it was just another Government ploy. As far as I can see, it's only cost more money, a lot of aggravation... All I can see is more frustration... And there are offices set up in the High Street where there wasn't one before. They were in an old office, and as far as I could see they delivered the service perfectly adequately... had to appoint new staff. There's a colossal amount of work been generated by it. Which I debate whether it was really necessary at all. And I don't think the public are necessarily any better served now... from my experience on joining this school and as a citizen, I am not aware of any improvement as a result of Reorganisation. (HSS1).

This quote is notable as being expressed by a head teacher in the arguably least affected Highland Council, although such sentiments were echoed and amplified elsewhere.

No one believed the Regional EAs were perfect. However, there is a common perception that in the run up to Reorganisation, transition and early post-Reorganisation experiences, the situation has not improved and in some cases worsened with benefits being minimal to date. There was a belief that the problems of the old system could have been ameliorated by the investment of monies used for Reorganisation and perhaps a lesser internal Reorganisation, e.g. of Divisions. Reorganisation was perceived as radical, political, costly and ultimately unnecessary. Nevertheless, with the new system in place there was a willingness to try and make it work as well as possible

The combination of DSM and Reorganisation had significant implications for the education system. There was an assumption that schools were to be ‘empowered’ and

EAs become 'enablers'. The roles and relationships of schools and EAs were changing.

The Role of the School

Of the two policies, it was DSM that had the greatest impact at school-level. Shifts in the school's role began with DSM pre- Reorganisation, but did not alter especially post- Reorganisation. Officers believed that schools had been protected from the worst upheaval of Reorganisation. However, head teachers were unhappy when they perceived a loss of control post- Reorganisation, e.g. due to centralising policies and budget constraint. However, such shifts were within the overall role change occurring due to DSM, which was discussed extensively in the pre- Reorganisation interviews.

In Strathclyde's promotion of DMR, officers spoke of "empowering our establishments to deliver the goods... (to meet) objectives in local circumstances". One officer explained: "Before DMR the school's control over their budget was limited. Therefore, the changes occurring in the 1990s were a dramatic change". It was argued the changes were not simply budgetary, but created increased accountability at school- level and a concern with quality assurance, "the self-evaluating school". The majority of head teachers spoke of changes at school- level and perceived an increase in accountability. The Highland schools had limited experience of DSM, e.g. their staffing budgets were not devolved initially, and therefore some heads perceived that a 'dramatic change in role' had not occurred and felt no more accountable. Some schools without school boards felt less accountable. Nevertheless, the majority of opinion suggested that DSM either had or held the potential to alter the school's role.

A) The Role of the Head Teacher

DSM requires the devolution of budget to the head teacher's responsibility, therefore it is likely that their role will be most affected within schools. In Strathclyde, an officer spoke of the head teacher as an accountable manager: "Managers who make decisions are responsible for the financial consequences". In Grampian, there was concern that the focus on 'financial management' may reduce time spent on

'curriculum management' and therefore be detrimental to the head teacher's role in improving teaching and learning. While in Highland, it was stressed that head teachers always had some 'autonomy, 'influence' and 'decision- making powers':

DSM gives a little more freedom. However, it is not a changing emphasis as head teachers always had a significant impact on education decisions. Head teachers always were to an extent free- standing.

These issues as to whether the head teacher's role has been transformed, the extent to which head teachers are managers, and whether this detracts from the 'teacher' role were echoed in the comments of head teachers.

Head teachers felt their role had altered and been 'enlarged':

I'm involved more in management issues which are not related to the delivery of the curriculum... I would have regarded myself, in the old fashioned way, of head teacher as... 'first among equals' or the curriculum leader... But increasingly I get dragged into the management issues, management decisions... personnel management... property matters... financial decision-making... trying to profile our budgets... and to monitor use of our budgets... so in all of these areas the role of the head teacher is changed quite significantly... more and more away from direct delivery of the curriculum, and into a more management and decision- making role. (GRCSS2).

Despite the perhaps negative connotation of 'dragged', this head perceives the change as a challenge to which he has adapted, as have many others. Many heads espoused the benefits of being "closer to the decision- making process". However, the changed role was not simply due to DSM, but also wider policy changes, e.g. school development planning, introduction of technology and ongoing curriculum reform.

Many heads spoke in terms of being 'managers' or an expectation that they would become more 'manager- like'. Some heads perceived no problem and felt that they always had been both 'teacher' and 'manager'. The head teacher of a large secondary explained his school was the largest organisation in the area employing over one hundred staff. Consequently, the head teacher believed he was a manager with considerable responsibilities for personnel, quality control, leadership and vision.

Head teachers across the range of scales of primary spoke of being manager and teacher. They believed DSM enhanced and facilitated their management role. However, two secondary heads spoke of the need for awareness of the managerial role and to ensure that it enhanced, not detracted from, teaching and learning. In secondaries and larger primaries, once someone becomes a head teacher they have little direct classroom contact. For some, this may make the managerial role more appealing, but it requires also the need to seek classroom - level opinion and contact. In smaller primaries head teachers spend more time in direct class-room contact. It was mainly these heads that were concerned about and resistant to the shift to a 'managerial' role. One head rejected the ethos of change:

We are head teachers, and the emphasis should still be on teachers. We are not accountants, we are not managers, and we are certainly not trained to count the toilet roll... we are going to end up like hospital managers. And if that's what they want, that's fine. But take out us out of the FTE. (SRCPS1).

Another primary head spoke of the tension between "managerial and educational roles... managers in education are disadvantaged because they have to be 'all things to all people'". Post-Reorganisation, a head argued that there were difficulties in 'balancing' the managerial and educational roles, both philosophically and practically:

the pressures are on us to fulfil our role as head teachers in terms of the educational side, and maintaining the standard of education. But really, we are trying to cut as many corners... It's really a different sort of job altogether.

Several heads of smaller primaries found the shifts in their role problematic and unwelcome - they lacked training, the new role is 'daunting' and "it's not the job I went into". This was compounded post- Reorganisation in Highland, where due to budget constraint, heads in small primaries had to increase their teaching commitments.

Some heads believed the capacity to meet the demands and relish the changed role of the head teacher would depend upon the characteristics of individual heads. Some perceived that certain personalities and heads that believed in 'open management' would be more receptive. Intuitively, this appears plausible but is difficult to measure within my research. Nevertheless, heads that were enthusiastic about DSM and

relatively relaxed about its development were more positive. One head suggested that age may be a factor, with older heads less amenable. This was not proven by my research, rather longer- serving heads tended to cope more easily with DSM, viewing it as another change in a long- line of rapid reform with which they would cope. Whereas younger heads worried about their capacity to cope with reform and with the long- term development of the education system and their career within. A further dimension related to the nature of the school. Heads in smaller primaries were having greater difficulty in dealing with the transition to DSM and associated workload, especially where they were also class- committed. Schools which were new and well- equipped entered DSM at a better starting point and the head need not worry about repairs and such like to the same extent. Finally, a healthy staff was a positive bonus as savings from the absence cover budget could be vired elsewhere. Therefore, factors relating to the head teacher and the school may alter the perception of their changing role created by DSM.

According to an officer, DSM should not involve a workload issue for head teachers due to the support provided. Most head teachers agreed workload was heaviest in the 'early days' of DSM , the level of workload varied over the year and it was essential to involve clerical support to alleviate the head teacher. The Strathclyde secondaries believed that they no longer had a workload issue and that the lasting change was in the nature of work not quantity. In Grampian and Highland secondaries, there was limited concern about workload, perceiving it as a general "problem in the profession anyway" and requiring delegation of duties. By contrast, the majority of primary heads did perceive a workload problem, although for some this varied over time and delegation was used. It was argued, with the exception of very small schools, primary heads should not be class- committed.

A shift post- Reorganisation was in an apparent lowering of morale, although arguably head teachers were not as vulnerable and directly affected by Reorganisation as officers. Teachers spoke of "pressure", "stress", the "threat of redundancies", being "really, really fed up... to keep churning the pot doesn't make any sense" and a feeling of "insecurity". However, there was a popular counter argument that "the majority of

people in school buildings are still optimists". An optimistic disposition was perceived to characterise teachers and in particular Scottish teachers. Furthermore, maintaining high morale was pragmatic: "We've got it (Reorganisation), it's here to stay, we've got to make the best of it. We've just to live with it and that's it". The impression is that in education and local government change is the only certainty and therefore must be coped with.

B) Involvement of School Staff

Other than the head teacher and clerical assistant, school staff were not especially affected by DSM. In all the schools, the head teacher retained ultimate decision-making responsibility over DSM. Some involved their Senior Management Team, either through delegation of specific responsibilities or more general consultation. However, it was emphasised that the head teacher makes the "key decisions" and this is implicit in the following statement, which indicates the general position in the secondary sector:

Before I make my decisions, I'll take it and consult the Senior Management Team.

The large primaries had SMTs also which were involved, directly through decision-making or indirectly by taking on other responsibilities thereby 'freeing' the head to concentrate on DSM. Small primary schools do not have a SMT, therefore placing demands on the small primary head's workload.

In the Strathclyde scheme of DMR, it was required that schools form staff consultative committees. Their nature and responsibilities varied. In the secondary sector, the committee consisted of representatives of the spectrum of staff in a school. Meetings ranged from weekly to only bi-annually. In the Strathclyde primaries, the majority operated a 'whole-staff' meeting, whereby DMR was included along with other issues in meetings after school or on in-service days. Therefore, there was not a distinct DMR Committee as such, but there was increased staff involvement. In Highland and Grampian, staff consultative groups were encouraged. However, no school in Highland and only two in Grampian had these (GRCSS1 & GRCPS3). Various reasons were offered. Firstly, head teachers did not feel sufficiently au fait

personally with DSM to present this to committee and scrutiny. Secondly, DSM was perceived as a job for the head teacher, by head teachers and staff. Thirdly, consequently, staff did not want to be involved in DSM decision-making they only wanted to be informed when necessary. Finally, especially in the primary sector, teachers are too busy and concerned with curriculum and classroom issues to have the time or interest to spend on DSM. Nevertheless, in all schools it was argued that staff in general are aware of the benefits of DSM. In some schools, minutes of meetings and documents were circulated amongst the general staff to inform them of decisions. Given the general continuity pre and post- Reorganisation, it appeared unlikely that substantial shifts in staff involvement would occur. Although some heads suggested that with experience, DSM should become 'enacted' throughout schools.

C) Involvement of School Board

Legally school boards must be consulted on various DSM issues. The schools were fulfilling these requirements, but had not developed DSM decision-making at school board level. School boards appeared 'happy' to receive general information only and believed that "the professionals should make the decisions". The presentation of DSM information was a 'formality' only. No school board had requested additional powers. In six schools that did not have school boards, no problems relating to the operation of DSM were identified. The notion that school boards would become powerful creatures agitating for self-managing schools is far removed from the reality of my research sites.

D) The Empowered Establishment

Strathclyde officers promoted the 'empowered establishment' as the consequence of DSM. Officers in the other EAs perceived DSM as having the potential to 'empower' schools and head teachers also. However, alongside this phraseology, Strathclyde rhetoric advocated DSM as 'freedom within a framework' indicating the continued need for the EA. Officers spoke of heads being able to "change priorities slightly within the terms of schemes of delegation" and the attachment of minimum standards to budget lines "so that head teachers were not in a position of absolutely unfettered freedom". The balance between 'freedom' and a constraining 'framework' remains

contentious. The existence of ring-fencing on budget lines was perceived, by Grampian officers, as limiting the management of heads. Furthermore, for many lines that were devolved, the Region retained responsibility, e.g. as a 'staffing agency'. One Strathclyde officer outlined his view of the nature and perception of this system:

I am now beginning to get head teachers noticing the fact that DMR is an immense accounting system which leaves them only relatively limited actual control over resources. We claim to have delegated something like over 80% of the budget, but we still tell them what to do with 80% of it... So the real freedom of action that the school has is very much around the margins... to a substantial extent, there is still acceptance of the notion that we are talking about 'freedom of action within a framework'. And people quite like that because they feel the framework provides them with a measure of protection. But I think they are beginning to feel that the constraints in the system are more than they would want to accept in a long-term sense. (SRCEO2).

Heads varied in their perception of DSM as 'empowering', 'freedom' or constraining.

It was in Strathclyde that there was greatest support for the idea that DSM had created 'freedom' and 'empowerment' for schools. Five out of the eleven heads interviewed believed DSM had created freedom. Interestingly within clusters, there was agreement between the heads interviewed²⁰. These schools were similar also as all were located in a predominantly rural area. Therefore, even within the same Region and under the same scheme, differences of perception and experience. The only other support that DSM had created freedom came from a Grampian secondary, which was also rural (GRCSS4), but it was explained that freedom was linked to increased accountability also.

The majority of schools that did not perceive DSM as creating 'complete' freedom, did believe that 'limited empowerment' had occurred. One head teacher believed this was appropriate as the school should be operating within the 'priorities' and 'framework' of the EA, therefore 'flexibility' rather than 'freedom' is encouraged. Others perceived limited freedom due to the difficulty for EAs to devolve fully the budget, consequently:

I recognise that in order to get 80% delegated to schools, they have to include all of these areas... I've got £2 million, now what can I do with that?. But I don't have £2 million... I've got £60,000 that I can work with, that's all.

This type of argument was particularly strong in Highland, with heads questioning the constraints on their budget yet generally "happy to be empowered within a recognised framework". There was a recognition that empowerment was 'limited' due to the make up of the budget and more generally in times of economic restraint and constraint, especially as evident post- Reorganisation. In a minority of cases, these constraints were perceived as preventing empowerment at school-level, arguing that such propositions were "an illusion". Out of the 25 head teachers interviewed, only four perceived no or severely limited empowerment resulting from DSM, these were all located in Grampian²¹.

Pre- Reorganisation eleven heads believed that more 'freedom' should be devolved to school- level, although a role for the authority was perceived also. The majority believed that many of the constraints on ring- fencing, virement and carry- forward should be ended, giving heads more budgetary freedoms. There was a general belief that more should be devolved over time with increasing experience and as a sign of trust by the EA. In Grampian, the idea of a 'cheque- book' system was popular. Nevertheless, six head teachers believed that the system was "about right":

I don't want to become an employer. I would be quite happy with the Authority as the employer. And I am to a large extent their local agent... Nor do I want to become anymore of a health and safety expert than I need to be. I don't want to become some kind of super DIY, all- purpose clerk of works. So really, what I'm saying is I'm happy with the boundaries... The balance is about right. Nobody is saying everything's perfect. (SRCSS2).

The self- perception of being an 'agent' of the EA is interesting and indicates that although the head supports DSM, he does not equate this with a 'self- managing', autonomous school. There were certain responsibilities and budget lines which heads did not want devolved to school-level, generally issues with contractual obligations, high costs and variability over time and space, e.g. staffing, travel, and capital works.

Opting Out

SRCEO2 suggested that as schools became accustomed to DSM and aware of its constraints, opting out may become more attractive. In the first phase of my fieldwork, nineteen head teachers said they would “absolutely not” consider opting out. Five believed that opting out was a possibility, but one that they would reluctantly take or be “pushed” into. Only one head did not directly respond, but discussed the problems in practice of opting out suggesting that he had considered the issue but did not find it attractive. However, post- Reorganisation only 10 out of the 21 heads interviewed said that they would definitely not opt out, 6 said that they would or had considered opting out, a further 3 said they would consider it but only in exceptional circumstances, while the remaining 2 did not give a direct answer. Therefore, in roughly one year from pre- to post- Reorganisation, my interviewees had moved from a position where only 1:5 would consider opting out to one where almost 1:2 would. Of the 5 head teachers who had considered opting out a possibility pre- Reorganisation, two retained this view post- Reorganisation²². Therefore, seven of the schools who had previously not considered opting out now perceived this as an option. Although the intention to actually opt out appeared weak, as opting out remained generally unpopular.

This unpopularity was pronounced pre- Reorganisation. Broadly, practical, political and cultural reasons were offered as to why head teachers would not support opting. The practical involvement of the school board and workload demands on staff were cited as problems. Many heads explained they liked having the “support of the Region” for a range of services, senior advice, a safety- net and as protecting, in particular, small schools. Many heads liked being part of an education ‘system’ rather than ‘isolated’ , involving EA support and a network of colleagues. One head explained his experience of direct contact with the Scottish Office did not endear him to opting out. The only opted out secondary school in Scotland is located in Highland Region, yet rather than being a flagship several heads commented on the “disaster of Dornoch” and all heads in Highland were opposed to opting out. Several heads spoke of being politically, philosophically and educationally opposed to opting out. Heads in two secondaries (GRCSS1, HRCSS2) located in urban areas with degrees of deprivation believed that opting out was “not appropriate for the setting” .

Furthermore, one head argued that opting out was wholly inappropriate for the culture and education system of Scotland, perceiving it as “an English measure enforced on the Scottish system... because something is tried in England with some success it shouldn’t be automatically transferred to Scotland”. These were pervasive and forceful arguments against opting out.

Nevertheless in the first phase of interviewing, five schools foresaw that opting out could become a possibility. None were considering opting out directly at the time of interview, but believed that in the future, especially with the potential turmoil of Reorganisation, it may become more attractive. Two heads suggested the combination of DSM and Reorganisation may “destabilise the system” and may have been a conscious political strategy to “create a climate for schools opting out”. Officers hoped opting out would not become widespread but felt that it could become more prevalent post- Reorganisation. One commented that there was a certain “inertia in existing system” which Reorganisation may break. The assumption was if the new EAs did not develop an adequate education function, nurture appropriate relationships with schools, created inappropriate ‘decentralised area structures’ and did not ‘add-value’ schools may opt out, especially if the Scottish Office provided incentives. One Grampian officer explained:

the critical thing is if the education authority here is seen to continue to deliver a good service, and a service that the schools want, I don’t think there’s a problem because... in Scotland... the political culture and the social culture is not for schools to opt out and go it alone. The strong, strong feeling is that we want to be partners with a good local authority. If however the local authority starts to get wrong and do things that we judge to be silly and worse things that the public starts to judge to be silly... it is the scenario, if Aberdeen City starts to have some really stupid ideas about how to organise education, I would guess the traditional schools... the parents will take these schools out... And that’s where the new politicians and all the new officials have got to tread a very careful line, in response to the service that they set up so that they do keep these people with them. (GRCEO3).

Another officer argued that the Labour party's apparent softening on opting out due to Tony Blair's exercise of 'parental choice' may remove political opposition also:

I think many people in Scotland felt unable to go down that route all the time it was seen as a Tory policy. It will no longer be seen as just a Tory policy.

Practical and political changes may promote opting out.

The possibility of opting out was most frequently mentioned in Grampian and here it was suggested political resistance may not be as strong:

maybe there is a cultural abhorrence to the whole principle of opting out. But I hear more and more of my colleagues talking about it as a realistic possibility. Not in the central belt, I can't say that I've heard that. But round here... And this is the area where it might well happen, where there's...relatively well off people who might push the system... And we're not Socialists... we're Liberal/Scottish Nationalists you see. (GRCSS2).

One head teacher was convinced that the future would see opting out for practical reasons and due to cultural shifts:

I think there is no doubt that schools will opt out within the next ten years, especially if the Tories get in again. And I'm not too sure that the Socialists are all that different... I think we are going to be screwed and screwed to the extent that the temptation to opt out. I mean the policy for opting out currently has not been very successful. But just put yourself into the circumstances that we've been in, we've been relatively well-resourced throughout Scotland I would say in education, but if that resourcing is cut back and cut back and you see class sizes growing and we see a whole lot of things at the same time... if you get away from the local authority all that money that's going to central resources will now come to you... you can now get access to capital funds from the Scottish Office and build a new gymnasium and swimming pool... people are going to be seduced by these nice stories... I'm convinced it'll happen... cultural things change... I think we're becoming a society more driven by materialism... the thing you'll find is that the school board are being filled by people who may have a business approach, they maybe see advantages in autonomy. Because at the end of the day, what's the

disadvantage to this school of opting out?. We're in a middle-class area, we've got rich parents. You know what's the disadvantage?. The disadvantage of staying in is that resources are being spread. (GRCSS2).

According to this vision a combination of contextual, cultural and practical factors will combine to encourage opting out, however this opinion is grounded in the specific setting and experience of the head teacher, large school, good socio-economic background, supportive parents and lack of political opposition.

The responses to the issue of opting out are interesting not only for what they say about opting out but also how this is expressed. There is the combination of conceptualisations of the education system outlined by the three discourses of 'Scottishness', 'partnership' and 'efficiency'. The quote from GRCEO3 captures the general argument - opting out will not be popular in Scotland because it is counter to the 'Scottishness' of a public collective system, it contradicts further the 'partnership' between school and EA which remains popular, but nevertheless opting out may emerge due to the organisational, managerial and economic benefits which it may accrue for schools (efficiency). Rather than sequential and distinct conceptualisations and discourses, the three are combined as explanations for constraint and change in the education system. The last quote from GRCSS2 presents the feeling that the education system is changing, with perhaps 'efficiency' arguments gaining dominance, and will continue to evolve and demarcate itself from previous practices. Yet, there are further issues requiring attention. Some heads had presented themselves as pro-active and capable 'managers' and 'leaders', consequently selecting to opt out could be perceived as a positive move to promote and protect the schools. Yet the interviewees spoke not of themselves as autonomous actors, but as reacting to enforced structural changes, e.g. economic constraints, and the actions of others, it would be parents and school boards who decided to opt out. There is the combination of structural, cultural and agency - level explanations, but the 'actors' within the school present themselves as passive recipients of changes generated by wider and predominantly structural forces.

Given the majority of schools who maintained opposition to both the practice and politics of opting out, a widespread change had not yet occurred, but there were

indications that some shifts post- Reorganisation may occur. The majority of schools suggesting that they may opt out believed that it would be due to the inadequacy of a future EA and resource benefits from opting out. Four of the schools were relatively large (GRCSS2 & 3, GRCPS3, SRCSS2) and perceived their scale to be advantageous to opting out. Nevertheless, one small primary perceived opting out as a possibility, but a last resort “for the sake of the school” (SRCPS3), here the school’s extremely rural nature meant that there always was limited direct contact with EA officers. For these schools, opting out may hold practical benefits.

This perception that Reorganisation may add impetus to opting out appeared to have some validity. To an extent, Reorganisation did destabilise the education system, although most EAs had worked hard to minimise this. Nevertheless, one head believed Reorganisation had not benefited the school and would therefore consider opting out:

Because what is the Authority providing for us that would make me want to stay with them?. So far, and we’re almost a year old in Aberdeenshire, all they’ve provided is mess. (APS2).

The combination of Reorganisation and resource constraints suggested to another head that the school would be ‘better off’ to opt out:

Definitely. Now this is a reaction. There are political principles and ideals and so on that I am uncomfortable with when I say that. Because I believe in state education for all. I believe in the comprehensive principle. I have to be perfectly honest and say that looking at all the evidence, particularly over the past year, and the kind of controls that I have seen from Highland Council and the kind of financial problems the Authority are facing, and the way that affects us to deliver a service in the school... And then you look at the example of the one opted out secondary school in Scotland. If I were then to say logically how can I best deliver the service of education, the answer would have to be through opting out... If I put aside all these political ideals...and say let’s talk about the reality, I am convinced if this school opted out now, we would end up significantly better off. The staff morale would be raised enormously. And we would be able to deliver a service which made us all very

happy. And I don't like saying that, because I believe in state education. And the other half of me is arguing, stay within, fight from within. (HSS1).

The fundamental issue is political principles could be put aside for perceived pragmatic benefits of opting out. This was the scenario dreaded by Officers pre-Reorganisation.

With Reorganisation and budget constraint in City of Glasgow had come a programme of school rationalisation. Both Glasgow schools in my sample were identified for closure and had consequently balloted to opt out. However, neither were a "genuine" attempt:

I think the parents, back at that time, although they went through the motions of it, it was purely a delaying tactic they had no intentions of opting out.

The teachers were not keen to opt out and there was some concern about the cost involved of going through the ballot and to the Scottish Office "when at the end of the day, the parents are saying no we don't want it" . Officers were concerned also about conflicting policies and strategies from Central Government:

...pushing Councils to rationalise to save, I don't think they saw the implications of the opt out legislation. They didn't see the two things didn't sit the one with the other. One gave an opportunity for schools to avoid closure. I mean it's a significant factor that every opt out in Scotland has been from a school threatened with closure. And they've nearly all been rejected by the Government. Now credit them for doing that and not being tempted.

There is conflict between the need for the EA to have the strategic capacity to carry out rationalisation programmes and the ability for schools to opt out. There is potential conflict also between the ability for parents to initiate 'mock' opt out proposals which may be counter to the wishes of teachers.

Amongst officers, there was concern that schools did not appreciate that opting out would reduce local government resources and ultimately its role. Officers are concerned about the prospect of mass opting out:

If we fail and we lose a set of schools, then the rationale for local government is weakened. Without a local education service, then local government is

diminished in power and respect and credibility...It becomes a less influential player in the national scene if it's simply looking after the remaining local government function...if you take education away, then we take away a third of Glasgow's budget... So there are real dangers for the local authority structure. And there are signs South of the border in some right-wing think tanks that they would like nothing better than to fund education centrally with a national funding agency for all schools... if that happened it's a disaster. And again it's incompatible with this notion of local authorities and devolution, real local devolution as Mr Forsyth will. (COGEO1).

There are anomalies in the overall direction of Government policy. This returns to the tension between the promotion of centralisation and decentralisation. Although some officers believed the Scottish Office did not want major opting out, this would be an effective tactic in the supposed Conservative strategy to undermine local government. The officers' response was to promote and prove 'value added' by remaining with an EA:

The schools don't really have to stay with us, they opt out... So it sharpens our focus, in terms of anything we do really has to try and add value to the schools. I keep challenging staff... "does your effort make a difference?". And if not, why not. So we're trying to make the staff more responsive. (COGEO1).

A similar approach was being developed in several of the EAs and it was hoped that schools would recognise the benefits and stay with the EA.

A fundamental and ongoing reason why schools would ultimately not opt out was the pervasive perception of 'Scottishness' as a political and cultural belief in collectivism and public service:

I think it kind of goes against the Scottish ethic a wee bit. There is still a belief and a faith in the state system. There's not so much of a tendency to chance your arm and go for broke, and get into the PR and the marketing and try and do your colleagues down. And again it's the fairness thing, there are communities who could fund things and supplement and there are other communities who couldn't. And there's no way we would want to sit back and see schools becoming second class schools or sink schools. (AEO1).

This view of an equitable and egalitarian education system rather than an individualistic and entrepreneurial one was popular with head teachers. Even a head who espoused the need for an 'enabling' EA, argued the importance of the 'Scottish dimension':

I think there are undoubtedly benefits to the historic commitment in Scotland to a very homogenous publicly owned public service ethos, in local government and in education... And it is something that I personally would actively defend.

The proviso being that "nothing is forever" and if the new EAs make improper decisions or provide inadequate support, alternative approaches at school-level may have to emerge. Nevertheless, discourse of 'Scottishness' and 'partnership' are a pervasive and powerful counter-force to the 'carrot of opting out'.

Relationships between schools

A) Competition

This assumption and support for the principle and practice that Scottish education was collective and not individualistic nor competitive, affected the relationships between schools as well as with the EA. According to the literature on LMS, devolving school management can be introduced as a mechanism to encourage competition between schools. However, the vast majority of my interviewees did not equate DSM with competition, pre- Reorganisation sixteen head teachers believed that competition did not exist at all. In Strathclyde, two head teachers believed the particular nature of DSM, with 'safety nets' and 'average salaries', did not require competition. Only two head teachers suggested that DSM could create competition for resources, although this was an attempt to "screw money" out of the EA rather than a coherent strategy for competing against other schools. Given the location of some schools, there was little threat of closure nor immediate competitor. Furthermore, it was suggested that competition applied less to primaries as they were not affected by exam league tables and there was less money involved per pupil²³. Nevertheless, overall among those arguing that no competition existed, five volunteered information about pupils that

attended their school from out- with the 'catchment area', suggesting they were not oblivious to parental choice.

For those heads that believed competition did exist, it was limited and not specifically related to the introduction of DSM. Rather competition was perceived as being driven by the Scottish Office via the Parents' Charter and associated reforms. It was stressed that competitive behaviour was limited, 'amicable', and borne out of necessity. In Highland, one head teacher explained that "schools acknowledge their strengths for different pupils... but there is not competition for the bulk of pupils"²⁴. In Grampian, there appeared to be competition within Aberdeen city. Amongst the secondaries, it was stressed to be amicable and agreeable and a mechanism used was the promotion of the school via the local media rather than 'aggressive marketing'. One of the schools interviewed was a 'primary/ infant' school²⁵, this approach was becoming unpopular, the school roll was declining and a "need for marketing" was perceived. In Strathclyde only one school spoke of competition, stressing it was limited. This school was a medium sized rural secondary within commuting distance of large town schools, hence a concerted effort was made to encourage primary pupils to transfer to their 'local school', e.g. through newsletters and links between primary and secondary sectors. Interestingly, eight schools had falling rolls, but only one of these decided to 'market' the school. There was concern that 'magnet' and 'ghetto' schools would emerge. Competition was seen as unnecessary and un- Scottish with pressures being created by a political agenda and English - based perception of crisis. For a number of schools due to personal and physical reasons, competition was not pursued, but for a significant minority it was present.

B) Co- operation

In the Strathclyde rhetoric and some academic prescriptions (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Levacic 1995, Ranson & Tomlinson 1994) , co-operation between schools is encouraged to create educational development and to circumvent the negative consequences of competition. Strathclyde promoted DMR as a co- operative model and believe that it had some success in achieving this. The key mechanism being the 'cluster' linking a secondary and feeder primary. The meetings for DMR "facilitated"

the raising and sharing of a number of educational and support issues. Informal co-operation, where staff phoned between schools for assistance, emerged in some cases. In Grampian, a similar arrangement, the Associated Schools Group (ASG), was present but not as well developed for DSM linkages. Co-operation was greatest between primaries and only involved the secondary for issues concerning P7 to S1 transfer. By contrast, the secondaries spoke of the Review Group but that generally co-operation was informal and limited for DSM. Some Grampian heads suggested that co-operation was declining with experience of DSM and was less well-developed in areas relating to the relationship between secondary and primary. While in Highland, for DSM schools received Regional support rather than being linked: "They tend to work in isolation being supported by the finance officer or the clerical support person. You don't find much of a tendency for them to be like getting together". The DSM Steering Group existed and there were occasional meetings between pilot schools. The secondary schools did not co-operate with the primaries for DSM purposes. The primaries decided to co-operate with each other exclusively, to 'unite' to put forward a primary voice. However, a head of a large primary perceived this as inefficient, contact should be direct with the Region rather than lots of local groups going over the same issues. Co-operation was under-developed and only pursued to a limited extent. There was some limited co-operation for non-DSM issues, e.g. learning support, primary/secondary transfer, 5-14 and resourcing. Therefore, the level of formal and informal co-operation varied.

Head teachers spoke of areas where they definitely would not co-operate, e.g. money and teaching materials. This suggests there is a choice whether to co-operate, to compete or adopt another strategy, indicating that the relationships between schools are calculative. There appears to be differences between primary and secondary sectors, which impedes the desirability and development of universal co-operation. This suggests that co-operation may not become especially prevalent post-Reorganisation either. Some of the new EAs were encouraging more co-operation, especially Aberdeenshire, however in this case there was concern and some resistance at school-level, particularly amongst primary heads who had not been adequately consulted and involved.

C) Primary/ Secondary Divide

A Strathclyde officer argued DSM “had brought primary and secondary schools closer together”. A couple of secondary heads agreed speaking of ‘closeness’ and a ‘bridge’ being created. However, only one primary head perceived any advantages, arguing DSM gave teachers in the different sectors status that is more equal. The majority of primary and some secondary heads spoke of the discrepancies and differences between the sectors. A Strathclyde officer explained that with the budget lines becoming ‘open’ and ‘transparent’, primary heads could see that a secondary received more resources than a primary of equivalent size. Over half of the primary heads mentioned this issue arguing that the budget discrepancies between the two sectors were “ridiculous”, “crazy”, and “indefensible”²⁶. This was perceived as particularly unjust given the introduction of 5- 14. Concern was expressed as research suggests the early stages of learning and early intervention are crucial and therefore should be well-resourced. In Grampian and Highland, there was a feeling that secondary heads had greater capacity to influence the EA. One primary head in Highland thought that the scale of the primary sector made it more difficult for them to gain personal access and influence to the senior Directorate:

you have about fifteen secondary schools of any size in the Region, and you have got hundreds of other primaries. So they’ve got a powerful caucus to themselves. It is quite easy for the Director to invite the Secondary Rectors in and have a talk. We have to have delegates.

There was a belief that most officers had a secondary background and were therefore unaware of the needs and nature of the primary sector. In general and for DSM in particular, there was a perception that the secondaries were more favourably treated. It was hoped that post- Reorganisation in the smaller EAs closer, more equitable relationships would be formed. Some of the new EAs promised to address this issue, however thus far substantial sectorial differences remain.

The Role of the Education Authority

Before considering the role of the central EA, it is worth noting that DSM affected the roles of other local authority departments also. Schools now have frequent and personal contact with a range of Departments. Schools generally welcomed these

developments. However, differences between the Regions and Departments were evident. In Strathclyde and Grampian, the Finance Departments and accountants were praised for their support, as were the Strathclyde Personnel. In Highland, greater problems were identified where non- Education Departments were reluctant to release power. In all Regions, the Department which was most resistant to DSM was the Property or Architecture Departments, evidence was cited of costly and inappropriate advice, lack of recognition that schools had budgets devolved and unwillingness to relinquish control. There was potential for communication problems between Departments and levels. This issue related to the awareness and commitment displayed towards DSM throughout the Region. The situation required development and amelioration post- Reorganisation.

A) The Divisional Office

The Regional EAs covered a large geographical area, thus more local 'Divisional' or 'Area' offices were created to enable local contact, although these were extensions of the central HQ and not autonomous units. Nevertheless, there was a perception that the Divisions had developed different identities and assumed powers. It was anticipated that DSM would profoundly alter the power and remit of the Divisions, which were to be challenged by Reorganisation also.

In Strathclyde and Grampian, the Divisions were diminished the most, with Highland retaining the need for an 'area- level' involvement. In the former Regions, the Divisions were perceived by officers as inadequate decentralisation, hence the shift to school- level. Unsurprisingly, Divisional officers resisted these changes. Nevertheless, evidence suggests that the Divisions were increasingly by- passed, e.g. schools had direct ordering facilities and Divisional personnel were being reduced. The officers argued that the Divisions required either reform or eradication. The secondary heads in Strathclyde tended to agree with the officers. It was argued that the Divisions had too much autonomy pre- DSM. The new system was perceived as superior, more equitable and more standardised. However, in the other authorities and especially in the primary sector support for the Divisions remained. In Grampian and Highland, contact for DSM support was made to Divisional level. This was less so in

Strathclyde, but the primaries here continued to identify strongly with the Division rather than the Region²⁷. It is perhaps evidence of the argument that Strathclyde was simply too big and the Divisions too prominent, that the majority of primary heads identified firstly with their Division, one even perceived it as the 'central EA'²⁸. DSM began to remove powers from the Division, however confusion remained and was a key argument for Reorganisation.

B) The 'Central' EA

The issue about the role of the EA and its future nature in light of DSM and other reforms is a crucial and complex one. Interviewees talked widely and sometimes imaginatively on this subject. Therefore, the 'findings' indicate what the role of the EA was perceived to be in light of DSM and what it was predicted it should be to meet the demands of the changing and future education systems. An extensive list of roles was discerned indicative of possibilities and preferences rather than comprehensive detail of 'what is'.

The Audit Commission (1989) provided a 'blue- print' for the LEA due to ERA (see table 9.8). These proposals received widespread dissemination and influenced Strathclyde's promotion and purpose of their reform. However, the Audit Commission report was not derived from extensive interviewing at school-level. There is no previous research considering what both education officers and head teachers in Scotland perceive as the key roles of the EA. Hence, the necessity of my work in this area.

Many of the Audit Commission's 'roles' were evident in my research findings also. However, notably the more 'market- oriented' roles were not cited at all - e.g. there was no mention of any role akin to the 'Information Provider' role, nor a concern for EAs to develop links between schools and private sector, or a perception of EAs as 'buyers' of education from schools integral to an 'internal market' (Levacic 1992). While there was occasional mention that the nature of EA service provision should alter, perhaps to "arranging access" from other suppliers (SRCEO4), or to the creation of service- level agreements (GRCEO1 & 2), the vast majority of head teachers

wanted direct service provision by the EA for a wide- range of services. Indeed, the 'service provision' role was the most frequently cited one in my research, yet it is a role that the Audit Commission implied no longer existed. Nine key roles were identified in the phase 1 interviews, these are presented in table 9.9 ranging from the most frequently cited to the least. There is some cross- over with some of the Audit Commission's roles, however in some cases I have adopted different labels to reflect the wording and meaning of my respondents (see Table 9.10). In practice, the roles are not mutually exclusive and there are a combination of functions across roles.

Table 9.8 Audit Commission's (1989) Six Roles for the Future LEA

<i>Role</i>	<i>Key features</i>
LEADER/ VISIONARY	setting overall policy objectives; defining context for schools; articulating vision of education service; encouraging and guiding co-operation between schools and EAs; developing links between schools and other agencies, e.g. voluntary and private organisations
PARTNER	supporting schools, especially for curriculum, financial, human resource, development and planning issues; May involve creation of 'contractual' relationship between school and EA
PLANNER	Planning future facilities and making objective assessments of need
INFORMATION PROVIDER	To facilitate parental choice in the education market
REGULATOR/ BUYER	Monitor, inspect and report on performance of schools; EA as buyer of education from schools for pupils
BANK MANAGER	Determine resourcing of schools

(Adapted from: Audit Commission 1989:1- 9).

Table 9.9 Key Roles for EA Identified in Fieldwork

<i>Role</i>	<i>Related Issues</i>
SERVICE PROVISION	provide and ensure statutory services, provide support services, Advisory and development service, SEN, Psychological services, Insurance, Legal services, Technical/ IT, Transport, Building services, Library, Careers service, Janitorial, Meals , Cleaning
STRATEGIC	Determining policies and priorities, Distributing resources justly, Specifying standards and quality, Strategic and overview functions, Strategic planning, 'Enabling' EA, Ensuring statutory requirements, Disseminating new policies, Adapting national policy to local setting, Corporate issues, Curriculum matters, Provision of buildings, School closure, Defining 'catchment areas', Co-ordinating educational provision, Health & safety, Develop DSM, EA purchasing
SUPPORTER	provision of support services, IT & admin staff for DSM, Support for education & teachers, Provision of 'back- up' when necessary, Financial 'safety- net', Support for buildings, 'Layers of support', Provision of Divisional/ Area office
STAFFING AGENCY	Payment of salaries, 'Staff College' - development, training, Personnel function, Protecting staff & standards

MONITOR	Ensure school meets statutory obligations and accountability, Monitoring school's use of finance and educational aspects/ quality assurance
ADVOCATE/ OMBUDSMAN	Represent schools and act as counter- balance to Scottish Office, Defend education service to other LA services, Inform local politicians about education, Promote needs of <u>Scottish</u> education, Raise profile of education in public, Promote parental 'responsibilities' not simply 'rights', Investigate parental complaints against school
LEADER	E.g. in allocation of resources, Visionary leadership & proactive management, Develop education service and DSM
BANKER	Budget provision, Creation of a 'budget unit', Allocating & monitoring resources
FACILITATOR	Encourage co-operation between schools & teachers

(See appendix U for further details).

Table 9.10 Comparing Roles Identified by Audit Commission and My Research

<i>Role Identified By Audit Commission (1989)</i>	<i>Links to Roles Identified in my Research</i>	<i>Comments</i>
LEADER/ VISIONARY	STRATEGIC LEADER FACILITATOR	The 'strategic' role was important in my research but does cross- over with a notion of a 'Leader' role also. N.B. in my research no mention of 'Leader' as creating co-operation between schools and private sector
PARTNER	SUPPORTER [To a lesser extent: SERVICE PROVISION & STAFFING AGENCY]	The term 'partner' was rarely used. However, schools were keen to have the continued 'support' and, for many functions, the direct involvement of the EA
PLANNER	STRATEGIC LEADER	
INFORMATION PROVIDER		This was never mentioned in my research, in terms of providing information to facilitate parental choice. However, schools and EAs required information to ensure financial management internally.
REGULATOR/ BUYER	MONITOR	'Buyer' role not mentioned
BANK MANAGER	BANKER	
	SERVICE PROVISION	This role was the most frequently cited by head teachers and strongly cherished. It is not contained within the Audit Commission's roles.

The nine roles signify a potentially vast range of roles and extensive remit for EAs. Arguably, this is contrary to the expressed intention of Government policy and evidence from England. There are some 'roles' which accord with Government policy, perhaps most importantly the 'strategic', 'monitoring' and 'banker' roles. Officers in particular argued these were fundamental roles for the 'reformed' EA. The notion of a 'strategic' and 'enabling' EA was proposed. Head teachers agreed with the general notion of these roles. However, in the main a narrow view of the 'enabling EA' was not espoused, but rather a broad- ranging 'strategic' functions which involved both leadership and detailed involvement in the education system were promoted. Schools wanted EAs that were active, involved, carried out practical functions and were supportive.

Amongst officers, there was an assumption that the 'service provider' role was diminishing and it was not predicted as a future role. Only one officer spoke of 'infrastructural services', e.g. insurance and legal services, within a broad version of an 'enabling EA'. However, amongst head teachers, the Service Provision role was considered to be crucial. An extensive list of 'services' were cited ranging over professional and practical support, plus the arrangement of contract services. There was a general belief that some services should be reformed to be more responsive to school demands and more efficiently provided. Some services were contentious, e.g. advisory, library and careers services, with a minority believing that these could be purchased out- with the EA. However, such a strategy was less popular with primaries, and across sectors there remained a belief that for the services cited 'in-house' provision was preferable, as you are dealing with people who are familiar with education, the school and teachers. Nevertheless, there were some specific services where devolution and 'freedom' were welcomed, such as the purchase of materials and minor repairs. The important issue is that head teachers wanted an extensive and central service provider role for the EA, this is contrast with Government policy towards 'enabling', 'markets' and privatisation.

Furthermore, in facilitating DSM and educational reform, a substantial role for the EA was perceived also. EAs are to be 'supporters', 'staffing agencies', 'monitors' and

'bankers'²⁹. These 'roles' are not simply 'enabling' and relatively 'hands-off', they presuppose the detailed and daily involvement of EAs in the education system and operation of schools. Finally, head teachers perceived EAs as their 'advocates'. This is recognition of the political nature of education. EAs were to defend schools within the council, against the Scottish Office and to parents. This is a far-cry from autonomous schools. Again, it suggests a direct involvement and link between school and EA.

My research suggests that, in rhetoric at least, officers considered a future education service that was closer to the Government proposals of the 'enabling EA', than the head teachers did. Rather heads wanted a supportive, competent and involved EA to directly and indirectly support and service their needs. Head teachers are not yet ready for the abolition of EAs. Nevertheless, this is not to say that the EA of the future should be unchanged. Heads welcomed devolution in some areas. Consequently, some believed that a smaller central administration and more efficient use of resources would be more appropriate. Following INLOGOV, Strathclyde proposed that DMR would create the appropriate separation of strategic and operational roles, the former to EAs and the latter schools. This had similarities to the Government's vision of devolved management and 'enabling' authorities. Yet, a complete separation of 'operational' and 'strategic' has not occurred nor does it appear particularly desired at school-level. One officer explained that conceptually and especially practically such a separation was difficult to achieve:

I think partly the difficulty will be when you try to define clearly the respective roles, it becomes messy. And that's why operational issues and strategic issues are very difficult to disentangle.

School-level reluctance and resistance may be a factor.

However, change had begun and is evolving. A Grampian Officer explained:

DEM, without reorganisation, has challenged the way that the Centre manages and organises itself anyway...we didn't need ...reorganisation to do that.

However, the common assumption was that the combined impact of experience of DSM and the transition to Reorganisation would both require and provide the opportunity for potentially radical reform of the structure and operation of EAs. The

initial structures and emerging operation of the EAs post- Reorganisation were discussed earlier. Interviewees post- Reorganisation advocated essentially the same nine roles as outlined. A vital and varied role for the EA was perceived, although many believed that this should be achieved within “a lot more streamlined structure”. Nevertheless given the range of roles a strong core central staff would be necessary. The role of the EA was changing and had been challenged by DSM and Reorganisation. Post- Reorganisation there was need to justify the purpose of EAs, addressing issues of efficiency, effectiveness and ‘enabling’.

One Officer explained her rationale for the role and necessity of an EA:

what is the role of the Centre?. Why does the Centre exist at all?...within a devolved management structure, that’s a very real question and a very real debate. My own view is that the Centre doesn’t exist as of right. We exist because we add value to the education process... by the decisions we take, by the influences we bring to bare, we clearly have a bearing upon the effectiveness of what that education service is like. (SLEO1).

A common argument was that the purpose and justification for EAs was to contribute to the educational effectiveness of the system, i.e. for the end point of teaching and learning.

However, a more controversial debate was how this system could be made most efficient. The Government’s preferred option was the model of the ‘enabling’ EA. This notion gained some currency post- Reorganisation:

I would guess that there’s much, much more management talk in local authorities now than there ever was. Whereas before local authorities presumably saw themselves as the provider of services... no argument about it. Now increasingly they are beginning to question that role and say well we might not be direct provider in some cases, but we’ve got to certainly make sure that whatever we do or however the services are provided that they are very efficient and very much fit the purpose. (COAEO1).

For political reasons, East Renfrewshire were developing along the enabling model. Other EAs were becoming enablers in some respects due to the pragmatic necessity of

budget constraints and scale preventing them providing the full range of previous services. However, as implicit in “not being direct provider *in some cases*”, this is a piecemeal and pragmatic approach rather than the overall desired vision of the education service. As the examples concerning lack of joint working arrangements demonstrate, EAs were keen to remain their own service providers. Indeed, for some EAs this was a fundamental political and principled objective, as in South Lanarkshire.

At the school- level, a couple of head teachers espoused the need for an ‘enabling’ EA. Both heads believed that they were being undermined by central intervention. However, the ‘enabling’ was not purely managerial, but linked to educational effectiveness:

The role of the Authority is, in a state of local cuts in local government, is to enable. Therefore in order to enable the highest quality in education... clear decisive leadership at Region level, and the authority to audit everything and have everything made accountable both in school and offering the school in terms of all your support mechanisms, organisational central support, etceteras... And it should say has what I have done today made a positive difference to a child?. And that should drive everything else... Also, I would wish to see support at a strategic level, but make sure the operational delivery is highly flexible. (A&BPS1).

In this view the ‘enabling EA’ retains extensive responsibilities and roles and must be linked to ‘enabling educational effectiveness’ not an abstract notion of economic efficiency. Although not articulated in such terms, the majority of heads would agree with the need for the EA to contribute to educational effectiveness, but perceive this as being through direct service provision and support. A crucial role for the EA is perceived which affects and is affected by the shifting relationships between school and EA.

Relationship Between EA and School

In the post- war period, the metaphor of ‘partnership’ conceptualised the relationship between school and EA. However, my findings suggest this relationship was changing

and developing and that various potential relationships are emerging. Pre-Reorganisation, there was a general recognition that the relationship between school and EA was changing. A Grampian Officer explained “if you look at the pervading socio-economic political philosophy of the present time, then it’s largely new managerialism” and that this affected roles and relationships in education. A Strathclyde Officer explained that the politics and policy of DSM resulted in the erosion of the traditional hierarchical relationship and the emergence of a network of varied and diffuse relationships. There was a general belief that policies such as DSM required necessary change in the relationship between school and EA. These changes required development, although officers stressed the need for change at school and EA levels, while head teachers focussed on how the EA should improve its approach. There was some concern that these new ‘diffuse’ relationships may result in “fragmentation” of the education service such that it was no longer an education *system*.

The notion of ‘partnership’ was infrequently mentioned pre- Reorganisation³⁰. Only one head teacher spoke of ‘partnership’ explaining that it existed inappropriately and inequitably in the past³¹. The ideal of an ‘equal partnership’ was advocated. Some of the officers believed DSM had “brought with it an element of partnership”. In Grampian, this was believed to be so important that the ‘principle of partnership’ was added to the EA’s Statement of Principles. A future ‘partnership’ model would need to be different from the ‘traditional’, ‘hierarchical’ and ‘unequal’ model in the context of ‘new managerialism’:

I think the traditional idea of partnership has been quite spurious. It’s been a word that’s been bandied around an enormous amount. That’s why I keep brining it back and tying it down to relative roles. Because if you think about a business partnership, then you have an understanding of who does what to achieve a desired objective and an agreed principle. That’s what we’ve never got down to talking properly with all partners about... the future success of the new local authorities , as leaders of that partnership, depend upon the extent to which they are able and willing to do that. (GRCEO4).

If the relationship is to be conceived of as a 'partnership', it is not a continuation of the 'post-war partnership', but the development of a modern and managerial 'partnership'.

In Strathclyde, the process of defining and clarifying 'relative roles' had begun. The purpose was to develop "complementary relationships" rather than "duplicating" ones due to the assumption that "the nett effect of the relationship is the sum of the two areas of expertise". However, the metaphor was not of 'partnership' but rather the development of a new conceptualisation, the "symbiotic relationship":

The two messages that I gave (to head teachers): The first I don't know any better than you in this room, indeed in many cases you'll know an awful lot more than I do, but I know a lot of things you don't know, I know how the political machine works, I know how the policy formulation machine works, and what I need to do is mediate your needs... that shift... started the symbiotic relationship. But... they were operating within the system... I was their boss. Because there was a professional thing that no they didn't have bosses... it was about clarification of roles. I was the public representative of the Council... technically I was their line manager, but what I was also saying to them was but there are things that you know about running a school and managing an institution that I have no idea about, you need to tell me about them and I'll try to mediate... that's how I described the symbiotic relationship, that I couldn't improve the system without the clear support of the Heads and the Heads couldn't deliver the system without my support. So we were really interdependent in a sense.

This suggests the relationship is changing and requires to do so, roles are being 're-defined' and responsibilities altered. Nevertheless, the EA has ultimate control over the 'relationship', suggesting officers had deliberately initiated and defined the 'symbiotic relationship', and the education system, 'line management'. The relationship may not be as authoritarian as traditionally, although this is questionable, but it is not laissez-faire.

'Symbiosis' is an interesting conceptualisation of the education system, defined as:

1. An association of two different organisms living attached to each other or one within the other, usually to the advantage of both. 2. A similar relationship between people or groups. (Hawkins 1988:829).

It connotes a closer relationship than 'partnership' where a person "shares with another or others some activity" (*ibid*: 589). Partnerships are chosen, conditional, calculative and limited to specified activities. Symbiosis infers a complete interdependence, across all activities and indeed existence for survival (biological metaphor). The 'symbiotic relationship' analogy was adopted to promote the development of DSM within an EA framework and to forewarn against the undermining of the EA due to Reorganisation. At a time when the links between school and EA could be weakening, a discourse was constructed implying the necessary closeness of the two.

Almost half the interviewees believed the relationship between school and EA either was or should be 'symbiotic'. They argued that school and EA were to an extent interdependent as they relied on each other for different things. However, such a relationship had practical difficulties and was politically contentious: "The whole idea of symbiosis to the ... Right-wing politician is just an anathema, it doesn't work, it doesn't make sense" (GRCEO3). Furthermore, there was recognition that the view that "we can't survive in isolation from one another" (HRCEO3) was 'naive', changing and a perception that favoured officers:

I think we are dependent on each other. I think the balance of power, however, has swung. I think going back twenty years, schools were very dependent on the central authority...there's still a balance, but the balance has swung much more towards the schools. Symbiosis is still there. But it's of a different type. I'm not sure who's feeding of whom now... I think maybe the education authority is feeding of the schools now, rather than the other way around. (SRCSS4).

For some head teachers the relationship was perceived as 'symbiotic' because they did not perceive opting out as a viable option.

That schools have the capacity to exist without the EA meant that the notion of the 'symbiotic relationship' was an 'anathema' to some head teachers:

The school is not symbiotic with the Authority. The school could exist, schools existed before there were local authorities... But I would say that the local authority needs schools, otherwise it's not got nothing to do... So symbiosis as I understand it is a necessary mutual dependence. Well I don't see it as being necessary. And I think history makes that quite clear. And incidentally there are independent schools all over the country, existing without local authorities. But I'm not surprised that they (EOs) said that... their jobs require schools. (SRCSS5).

The apparently dominant perception of the 'dependence' between school and EA is interesting given the existence of counter 'factual' evidence. It appears that EAs and the continuing belief in a public, collective education system, linked to 'Scottish myth' and 'Partnership', have succeeded in persuading head teachers in their necessity. 'Opting out' and strictly 'enabling EAs' have little popular acceptance amongst Scottish head teachers.

However, as a Strathclyde officer explained the existence of opting out placed schools in a 'voluntary relationship' with the EA. Some heads were aware of this and used it calculatively. In practice, they had no intention of opting out, but the principle that they could enabled them to expect a more 'responsive' and appropriate 'service' from the EA. Four schools spoke of themselves as being the 'client' of the EA, which must adapt accordingly. Officers spoke of the need to devise DSM that satisfied schools and prevented opting out. The relationship between EA and school had to 'add value' to both 'partners'. This perception was stressed also by officers post- Reorganisation seeking to define and defend the future relationship between EA and school.

Shifts in the relationship between school and EA are occurring but not straightforward. Different relationships are emerging, require development and can be perceived differently. There was a general recognition that increased 'powers' and roles had been devolved to schools. Several heads believed that the power of the EA had been reduced and that officers had resisted such a trend. However post-

Reorganisation, there were concerns that school “autonomy” was being reduced due to budget constraints and the potential for new EAs to become interventionist and centralist. There was acceptance that for schools the relationship was based upon “freedom within constraints” (COGSS1), which appears an oxymoron where the resolution of emphasis depended on varying practices. There was a general perception that the relationship between schools and EA was based upon a shifting power relationship and involved an element of dependency.

However, some officers bemoaned the failure of heads to grasp the potential changes in their roles and relationships with EAs:

I sometimes feel depressed at the extent to which our heads don't grasp the opportunities that they have in front of them... And I just get the very, very strong feeling that an awful lot of our Heads are still very much in a dependency relationship... maybe the relationship is inevitably going to be like that.

Two Strathclyde officers spoke of the frustration of “baby- watching” head teachers who were highly- paid to perform management tasks. Although supporting DSM, a number of heads implied they were dependent on the EA for support. In Strathclyde, a minority of heads spoke of being in ‘Strathclyde schools’ and ‘agents ‘ of the EA³². For these schools, the improved management created by DSM is welcomed, but it is not perceived as a means to create managerial freedom nor autonomy. The majority of schools indicted their dependence on the EA, as evident in support for the ‘symbiotic relationship’ and in the extensive roles posited for EAs. Nevertheless, a minority of heads recognise that the EA is dependent on them also, although they have no desire to be ‘independent’.

Post- Reorganisation, officers argued also that head teachers had not embraced the full “freedom” potential. Decision- making was liked but not associated responsibilities:

in the past, there was a great tendency to pass things up the line. And blame the Directorate, the Management, central support. And with devolved management comes devolved responsibility. If a head teacher makes a decision to put resources into this area...he or she has to justify that and there

is no point in parents coming in to complain to us...It's a change of culture. Because the upward delegation was a big tendency in the past. I think this different way of working will change the emphasis quite significantly. That we will set the policy and parameters, but the actual delivery and local management is up to them. I mean clearly we would set specifications below which they couldn't go... It's a simple thing- here's what we do, here's why we do it, here's why we do it this way and not that way, and here's how much it costs us. It's as simple as that. (AEO1).

A Glasgow Officer agreed believing that it should be achieved but has not yet been:

Lots of head teachers...regard the local authority as being here to compensate... it's changing slowly. Certainly, we are not at the stage of being just the Banker and being able to monitor quality. We're still very much in terms of schools, a more immediate relationship with them... nanny local authority is still around in terms of some head teachers' perception.

Despite the shift to an 'enabling EA' and the view that "we are less paternalistic than we ever were before" (COAEO1), it is argued that schools must move further in taking on their responsibilities within the relationship.

This is not to say that EAs will have no responsibilities. Schools believed that EAs retained control due to their budgetary, monitoring, strategic and oversight capacities. Some heads welcomed Central decision- making to set strategy and co- ordinate policies and take ultimate responsibility. Decentralisation does not equate with no centralisation:

The irony is to have a really decentralised system, locally delivered, you need a strong central core. And this is where a lot of people misinterpret things - 'oh, you're retrenching, centralist model'. (AEO1).

In practice and principle, decentralisation requires some centralisation, however the balance between the two needs to be negotiated and clarified.

The most commonly cited change in the relationship resulting from DSM is increased 'openness' between school and EA. The budget is 'open' for scrutiny and based upon equitable formula. Especially for the pilot heads, the process of initiation and

implementation of DSM has given 'insight' into the EA's working. Paradoxically, although DSM in many ways distances schools from EAs in principle, in practice many involved spoke of an increasing 'closeness' in the relationship. However, alongside this 'closeness' and 'openness' comes increasing 'accountability'. Indeed, with the benefit of 'insight' a minority of heads questioned the workings of the EA. This drive for 'openness' and 'closeness' characterised the attempted relationships post- Reorganisation also. Head teachers welcomed the move to "more open government" where a new "closeness in terms of the relationship" was developing through good communication, approachability and supportiveness. In some of the smaller EAs, e.g. City of Aberdeen, this 'closeness' had been fostered through specific policies and practices linking EA and school, which were eased by the scale and relative physical proximity within the locality.

This 'closeness' in the new EAs was articulated through a discourse of 'partnership' as the vision of the future relationship. For example, a City of Glasgow officer said:

we want them to feel as partners in the management of the service... Staff should feel more involved... taking the head teachers with us as senior colleagues. So the relationship is different than you would have found say ten years ago, when it was very much the dominant authority and head teachers subservient. Although there has to still be a line management aspect, I think it's much more an equal partnership... trying to work out with our schools the direction of the Authority. Giving them freedom to develop and to suit local circumstances, but always being there to back them up and to help them and to advise them... it's partnership.

Similarly, in East Renfrewshire, 'partnership' was a prominent discourse:

I believe in devolution of resources to the lowest level. You might call it subsidiarity... But I like to believe that our head teachers and schools are partners with us in the education service... we like not to be elitist in anyway. (EREO3).

Despite the Government's alleged erosion of 'partnership', it remains a discourse which was 'resurrected' to promote the nature of the future education service. In this case, by officers for whom it is useful to overcome notions that decentralisation equals

autonomy for schools. Rather than individualism and market forces, a collective and ultimately hierarchical, “line management”, approach remains in practice and philosophy. What may have changed, however, is the specific conceptualisation of the ‘partners’ in terms of their roles and the overall culture, from an apparently ‘autocratic’ and ‘elitist’ post-war model to one with greater shared responsibilities. An Aberdeenshire Officer argues that the way forward in a revitalised partnership model is through the development of:

professional trust and respect for each others roles. And it’s best summed up by we know what each other does, but we don’t try and do each others jobs... it’s a total change in style and emphasis.

This requires a greater clarification of respective roles, in practice and principle, plus a culture shift away from intervention.

It is possible that schools will accept the idea of a new partnership with EAs having a central role, based on the earlier evidence of schools wanting many and varied roles for and support from EAs. A contributing factor may be also the pervasive existence of a ‘Scottish’ tradition for consensus and ultimate deference to authority:

what’s remarkable is that no-one’s actually tested the system. You see when I worked in England we very quickly into devolved management when we were saying ‘I’ll do this and I’ll do this and try this’. And up here that has not happened. (COAEO1).

Despite the Government’s promotion of a discourse of economic efficiency and entrepreneurialism, the ‘traditional’ discourses of Scottishness, consensus, collectivism and partnership have stood the test of time. It is possible to perceive local actors and the ‘Scottish education community’ re- interpreting policy to suit their own perceptions and subsequent practices. Yet, in the above quote, there is the inference that the ‘Scottish consensus’ has become something more than the aggregate of agency- level expressions. Rather it is a pervasive structural force throughout Scottish educational, cultural, political and civil society. The overall impression is of an evolving set of relationships between EA and school which relies on a varying balance of power and an assumption of dependency. In principle, schools should have more power and potential for independence, however in practice the EA retains a

powerful and important position, although it may need to change and develop to meet changing expectations and needs.

Future Issues

The prospect of a **general election** had implications for education and local government systems. Some interviewees felt that even with a change of Government, there may be little change in policy and practices at local level. There were concerns that funding problems would remain. It was hoped that DSM would be maintained and enhanced. However, the extent to which opting out would persist was considered more party political and, due to uncertainties as to the future, this was not perceived as the best time to opt out. There was some aspiration that a Labour Government may be, in principle, more supportive of a public, collective education system, but a concern that, in practice, little substantial change would emerge.

One potentially significant change post- election was the possibility of a '**Scottish Parliament**'. There was uncertainty about its implications. One teacher believed:

I would have thought there would be a place for the Scottish Parliament... in terms of creating national policy and direction which local authorities will act in partnership with as the delivery mechanism for that, rather than Parliament and the civil servants working in the Parliament taking on the responsibility for monitoring schools and managing schools... a Scottish Parliament having a say in major national policy issues, but continuing the local level for local delivery.

This conceptualisation of 'partnership' between central government, EA and school is akin to the post- war notion of a 'national service, locally delivered'. An officer perceived merits in this approach for specific services and policies, such as IT, where a "national strategy" may be advantageous, provided this was combined with local implementation and personal contact with parents and pupils, via the EA.

However, other officers believed that the historical notion of a tripartite partnership would be undermined, in particular the role of the EA. They perceived the debate as being polarised between a national and local approach not a compromise of both:

One could go nationally, Scotland's a small country, it's smaller than ILEA... But then you have to say where is the local flavour... Again, it's the central versus decentralisation. What's the priority going to be?. You might make better use of your resources if you ran it centrally, but would people feel it was more distant... It all comes down to resources at the end of the day.

Since the origins of the Scottish education system, there has been debate as to the relative merits of a local or national system. In the post-war period, a compromise was attempted around the discourse of 'partnership' and a 'national system, locally delivered'. Nevertheless, the introduction of the intermediate tier of local government, while in many respects popular, was controversial in clearly defining its purpose and rationale as either a central or local body. With the introduction of DSM, small scale EAs and potentially a 'Scottish Parliament', the issue becomes more confused. Determining the appropriate balance between centralisation and decentralisation is inherently problematic, especially for a service such as education, which is difficult to quantify and delimit. The debate between efficiency and actual effectiveness, linked to the nature and needs of the local government and education systems, is pertinent. The perception is that ultimately efficiency arguments may gain greatest power due to structural changes in the economy which constrain and to an extent define the scope for political choice and subsequent agency-level action. But as the preceding has demonstrated in the mediation from structural forces, political choices, local decisions and individual implementation, many stages and possibilities may emerge within a broad framework of action.

Conclusions from Fieldwork

The range of research findings demonstrate there are a huge number of issues related to understanding the policies of DSM and Reorganisation, how they are perceived and consequently what are the practical implications for the roles and relationships of schools and EAs. In many respects, the interviewees were most concerned with the practical details of the policies, associated procedures and pragmatic benefits and problems. Nevertheless, in developing their perceptions of the 'practical facts', interviewees drew upon a range of pervasive discourses, historical legacies, cultural assumptions and political orientations. While the empirical details stand on their own

as interesting and illuminating, in order to fully understand this material it is necessary also to consider the associated conceptualisations and related theoretical underpinnings. Agents do not simply act on practical facts, but are 'driven' and constrained by wider structural forces also. The rhetoric of 'freedom within a framework' which promoted DMR, although apparently an oxymoron may ultimately be accurate if a relative, rather than absolute, connotation of 'freedom' is accepted. For all agents, at school and EA levels, various actions and interpretations are possible but within a 'framework' not simply of national and local policies, but also of historical legacies, cultural traditions, educational and political assumptions, institutional procedures, the workings of the policy community and wider structural forces, such as economic change. This will be explored in the next chapter. For the moment, I conclude with a summary of key practical details and perceptions related to DSM, Reorganisation, schools and EAs.

Devolved School Management

DSM as a policy and practice evolved over the period of my research. Although some head teachers were initially apprehensive about DSM, there was general recognition that the previous education system was inadequate, especially in terms of managerial and financial practices. The implementation of DSM was not entirely straightforward due to both conceptual and practical issues, but was encouraged. There were great concerns that DSM would be the allegedly inappropriate importation of English LMS. Especially with DMR, much was made to emphasise the practical and importantly principled differences from the English scheme. Nevertheless, in stressing the distinctiveness of Scottish education and DSM in particular, it is evident that it is not completely independent from what is happening internationally. The solution for DSM was to stress the co-operative and indeed collective nature of the model, rather than the individualistic and competitive. Yet, in practice, neither competition nor co-operation have emerged as especially prevalent, although the principle remains symbolically important as it re-enforces the Scottish, public and systemic nature of education. Having gained acceptance for the principle of DSM, practical factors were vital. Adequate computer systems, support structure, operational procedures and training were ongoing issues. These practical problems can improve over time but

require development. Due to budget constraints and Reorganisation, new and increasing problems are occurring. These problems are tolerated because there are many benefits associated with DSM, in particular the capacity for school-level flexibility to target resources. However, these benefits are perceived to be diminishing, although still present, post- Reorganisation.

Although DSM is a national policy, there are differences between EAs. There are differences also related to the sector and scale of school, the nature of its location and the experience of its staff. In general, larger schools in affluent locations with an experienced head teacher, capable clerical assistants and healthy staff were optimal. Primaries had greatest problems, especially small teaching-head schools. There were mixed reactions to the rise of the 'managerial' head teacher. There was a perception that education is distinctive, specialist and professional and therefore 'generic' management was unacceptable. The managerial role was developing and required development.

Despite problems and controversy, the overall opinion was that DSM was "very worthwhile". There were concerns that the problems must not outweigh the benefits. Hence, there was a need for future caution and development. But nevertheless, heads enjoyed being 'empowered'.

Local Government Reorganisation

By contrast, Reorganisation remained unpopular, being perceived as a political and costly mistake. Despite Government rhetoric that Regions were inefficient and unpopular, the head teachers perceived the opposite. It was hoped that benefits would emerge from Reorganisation, such as an improved relationship between school and EA, but at present, predominantly problems were perceived. There was concern that Reorganisation was inappropriate to the education system, creating instability and deterioration. Throughout the evidence on Reorganisation, there is the assumption that not only is Scotland different, but that within local government, Education is distinctive. In the issues of corporate arrangements, Schemes of Decentralisation and Reorganisation itself, officers and head teachers were keen to promote and secure the

traditional distinctive treatment of Education. If the Government's agenda was to eradicate EAs, this policy failed. All of the Authorities had educational Directors of Education with associated Departments and Committees, plus Education continued to receive some protection and preferential treatment, e.g. in terms of budget cuts.

Before Reorganisation there was an assumption that Reorganisation combined with DSM would radically reform the nature and organisation of the education system. Indeed, while the chance to improve the education system was commendable, some head teachers warned the new EAs not to 'throw the baby out with the bath-water', in moving too rapidly from the beneficial policies and procedures of the Regions. In the event, relative to the extent of possible change, the pace and level of change has been slow and gradual. Most EAs did not consider DSM as a policy to determine the shape of the future of their EA, but as something that was up and running and therefore not a priority. Some EAs did seize the "chance" (NLEO1) and "opportunity" (COAEO1) to reform the policies, practices and principles of the system. However, in the main developments were reactive, piecemeal and constrained by resources of limited budgets, time and personnel maintaining previous practices. From worrying about too much change, some heads were now "apprehensive...because there's a great danger of a missed opportunity" (ASS1).

That is not to say that there was no change. Gradually but in many respects decisively the new EAs were moving in different directions and departing from their predecessors. Whereas under the old large Regions, different localities were subsumed, these local differences were now compounded by being located in different authorities and were emerging. The authorities within former Grampian and Strathclyde were developing their own identities. This idea of 'localness' was a justification for Reorganisation. However, alongside decentralisation, within the new EAs, there were drives to create a 'consistent' and 'coherent' approach. Consequently, head teachers perceived a greater centralisation post- Reorganisation than had been possible in large spatially diverse Regions.

The Role of the School

DSM was perceived as a 'dramatic' change, which had created greater "freedom" and "autonomy" at school-level. Nevertheless, it was predominantly the roles of the head teacher and school secretary that changed, rather than changes throughout the establishment. The extent to which head teachers wanted greater powers varied. Pre-Reorganisation many heads spoke of wanting more devolved powers. However, post-Reorganisation the emphasis had shifted, in light of problems and budget constraints, to not wanting more devolved per se, but rather being given the ability and flexibility to manage what they should have devolved already. There were conflicts between the rhetoric of 'devolved management' and its realisation. Head teachers and officers were concerned that DSM was becoming "DA- devolved administration". There were tensions between notions of devolved management, devolved administration and devolved responsibility. The extent to which head teachers wanted full managerial powers and responsibilities varied. However, no one wanted purely devolved administration if this was simply a 'paper exercise'. Nevertheless, there was little evidence of an extensive managerial approach, in terms of entrepreneurialism and individualism, and greater examples of administrative and procedural approaches, linking in with the maintenance of arguably changed but still predominantly bureaucratic and hierarchical practices.

The Role of the EA

Linking with the above was the head teachers' keenness to maintain an important set of roles for the EA. Although in the 'turmoil' and 'destabilisation' of Reorganisation, more schools were considering opting out, in reality this appeared unlikely to occur. Head teachers espoused the need for a supportive and service-oriented EA. Although the language of the 'enabling EA' was more prevalent post-Reorganisation, it was still only espoused by a minority. Even for those proponents, the notion of 'enabling' promoted was relatively broad and required a central and interventionist role for the EA. For the majority of interviewees, as far as possible the service provider role of the EA would be retained, alongside strategic and supportive roles. Although schools welcomed flexibility and choice, they wanted also the retention of an EA. The notion that post-Reorganisation EAs would disappear was unrealistic and unpopular.

Relationships Between Schools and EAs

Therefore, the relationship between the EA and school was perceived as pivotal to the future and development of the education system. Pre- Reorganisation the notion of 'symbiosis' had been developed to encourage the idea that schools and EAs were inter- dependent. Although this assumption favoured the EA in many respects, it was also popular with many head teachers. With the possibility of opting out, schools have the capacity to choose whether they are dependent on EAs, yet the common perception was that schools did need EAs. Arguments related to the practical abilities of schools, the need for support, the cultural tradition of wanting to be part of a 'system' and assumption that collective, public and democratic education system was appropriate to Scotland.

Post- Reorganisation the language of 'partnership' became prevalent. Officers adopted this discourse to justify the continued involvement and relationship of schools and EAs. Although the partnership was still perceived as hierarchical, due to line management, it was argued that it would become a closer and more consensual relationship involving schools in EA decisions and consultations. In some visions of the future education system, the discourse of 'partnership' was utmost. While this may involve a different approach from the traditional system, e.g. due to changed policies and shifts in managerial culture, it nevertheless draws on the discourse of 'Scottishness', collectivist and egalitarian, and 'partnership', placing schools and EAs at the centre, rather than a market philosophy of individualism and privatisation. However, what remains to be resolved is the enduring issue of clarifying what are the 'respective roles' of EA and school, how can these be demarcated and what is the appropriate balance of centralisation and decentralisation. Education is a pervasive service that is difficult to demarcate and quantify. In many instances, it is difficult to distinguish where a strategic issue stops and an operational one begins. Clearly, the idea that there are certain issues and services which should be provided on a scale larger than a single school is valid, as is the fact that there are certain activities that are the responsibility of the individual school. However, problems exist in creating a standard approach for the diversity of the education system.

Despite the promotion and rhetoric of decentralisation, there remains the need for some central control and consequently tensions with the existence of 'centralisation'. An 'education market' per se does not exist and schools are not in practice nor perception 'free-standing' units. Education remains a system with a hierarchical nature. Tensions between centralisation and decentralisation are inherent. What is changing, however, is the nature and dimensions of 'central-local relations' in education. Taken as relative concepts, there are potentially many 'centres' and 'locals' in the education system. This issue has existed since the origins of the education system and remains, compounded by the introduction of many new institutions and agents. My research has focussed on the roles and relationships of schools and EAs. This is a valid and vital research focus. Nevertheless, it is necessary to recognise that the actions of these 'agents' is constrained by the various other levels within the education system, e.g. Whitehall central government, Scottish Office, school boards and parents. It implies also that notions of 'free markets' are unrealistic, although being promoted, and must be considered alongside the emerging relationships based on notions of networks and hierarchy.

Conclusions

There is a mass of practical issues and details revealed by my fieldwork. DSM and Reorganisation are developing through a process of creation, development, perception by those involved and actual implementation and continuing evolution. These policies are evolving and developing in ways different from what may have been originally anticipated by the supposed Government rhetoric of markets and managerialism, although this is not without influence. Fundamentally, assumptions of Scottishness and partnership remain pervasive and influential affecting the perception and development of the education system. It is with attempting to understand this changing system of education that the next chapter is concerned, evaluating my research findings in comparison to other empirical work and through conceptual and theoretical issues.

¹ A video was produced outlining DMR, as were OHP slides and presentations.

² Primary documentation concerning DSM in each of the three EAs has been drawn upon for my fieldwork and analyses of findings. These documents included: Grampian Regional Council (1993, 1994a & 1994b); Highland Regional Council (1993, 1995a & b); and Strathclyde Regional Council (1993a & b).

³ “ a mandatory requirement for head teachers to establish formal consultative procedures with school staff... In all but very small primary schools the formal mechanism should include the setting up of an elected staff committee... involve at least one member of the non- teaching staff”. (SRC 1993a: 9).

⁴ “She’s actually in post 25 hours, but we actually pay her more hours... we need extra time because she does a lot of getting value for money...phoning around, getting deals with people... she organises all the buses too, simply because that’s paid for through the budget, and she’s got a proper handle on it... these people are invaluable... it’s made all the difference. Certainly to me as a head teacher, because I just don’t bother day and daily what’s going on... I get involved when there’s problems”. (SRCSS3).

⁵ For example from 15 to 8 hours in SRCPS3.

⁶ E.g. due to the Review Group extra administration, clerical and management hours were introduced.

⁷ “The most massive change that we’ve had in this school I suppose in terms of work practices is the Information Technology Revolution. That I think has tentacles in every part of the school... the SCAMP scheme... has various sub-systems on it. And we have been one of the schools that have used more of the sub- systems than the other schools... SCAMP administration certainly changes your life.” (GRCSS2).

⁸ In Strathclyde, two received no training, and one received training after operating DSM for one year.

⁹ Grampian EA received £500,000 in 1994/95 and £282,000 in 1995/96 for the implementation of DSM. However, COSLA figures suggested that each EA would require around £1,300,000.

¹⁰ One Councillor opposed the development of DSM due to this factor bringing a motion to Council. This motion was overturned by a huge majority, sixty to four, as the other councillors are increasingly supportive of DSM due to head teachers’ welcoming this policy and its associated benefits.

¹¹ The schools in City of Glasgow were identified for closure but not actually closed thus far. GRCPS2 in Grampian/ Aberdeenshire was closed but this was relatively uncontroversial, as the school’s roll had dropped to only six pupils and there were other primaries nearby.

¹²

For example in East Renfrewshire there is a Head of Quality Development and School Provision, Head of Early Education and Special Needs, and a Head of Personnel and Adult Education. The exception is Aberdeenshire where the ‘Heads of Service’ are termed Head of Division and have a geographical area to cover (Central, North, South), as well as some authority wide functions.

¹³ A North Lanarkshire officer explained:

(the DoE) took up post in the middle of August. At that point, North Lanarkshire Education Department was (the DoE). There wasn’t anybody else, So it was quite difficult... (DoE) got an office in Hamilton to get started, but for the next seven or eight months (the DoE) was still Strathclyde... But people assumed that North Lanarkshire Education Department existed. They began to write, it was like Blue Peter stuff, (DoE) had mail bag upon mail bag... stuff like “what was North Lanarkshire’s view on this”, or “do you want to come to this meeting... if you can’t come can you send a representative?... there’s nobody else here. And eventually (DoE) managed to get a secretary was seconded to help out.... the Depute, started at about Christmas, that gave us two people. So that meant we had to create the budget for April 1st... when North

Lanarkshire started the schools' budget had to be on all these machines... Strathclyde were helping us to do it, but they wanted us to say well what do you want. So we spent a lot of time, the budget took a major concern. Both in terms of the fact that there was going to be cutbacks in the budget, that were causing problems, but also just in constructing it. So it didn't give a great deal of time to reflect upon what would be the future.

¹⁴Based on philosophy of *Inclusion, Entitlement, Diversity, Participation, Progression & Continuity*, and the key roles of the EA as *Resource Allocator, Leader, Monitor, Supporter & Facilitator*

¹⁵ "yes, they want us to be corporate. We are always round the Chief Exec's management team table... But the big juggernaut to some degree still rolls on. But yes they want us to be corporate. And I try to make sure that my colleagues are as well. But there's still a lot of educational activity going on out there that is direct to schools, and is largely driven by Scottish Office guidelines... And there's not a huge amount about these things that needs to be debated around, in my view... the Chief Executive's table... I think it's true to say that certainly (education) staff, generally speaking see themselves as focussed on the Education service, and while they are willing to be and should be corporate beings, in terms of working with integrated policies at the local level... but the core of the thinking in Education, the core of our thinking is done with an education service hat on". (HEO1).

¹⁶ "I always said that we are lucky to be in North Lanarkshire ...we are probably the ideal size for an Education Authority. South Lanarkshire is similar, Renfrewshire, Glasgow is bigger... Fife, Edinburgh- I think those authorities are about the right size. Because they are large enough to sustain services like the Advisory service... big enough to keep that going. Psychologists... say for secondary sector and planning for Higher Still, with 26 schools the possibility of joint working, of consortia, of joint arrangements, we can do that. So I think there's an economy of scale which we do have. I think we can strategically plan because we are big enough to do that. And I think we can supply a support service, which you can't really do in smaller authorities... able to transfer teachers... teacher progression... that's much more difficult in a smaller authority". (NLEO1).

¹⁷ The Cullen Report was the outcome of the shootings in Dunblane Primary. Its recommendations required the substantial upgrading of schools' physical security and safety procedures.

¹⁸ E.g. when North Lanark's DoE visited a school they had not met a member of Directorate for ten years.

¹⁹This was despite the fact that the DoE had visited SLSS1 while South Lanarkshire was a shadow authority, spending 3 to 4 hours in school. The head wanted more 'local' contact.

²⁰SRCSS3 & SRCPS3, SRCSS4 & SRCPS4, SRCPS6 favoured DSM as 'freedom'.

²¹GRCSS1, GRCSS2, GRCPS1, GRCPS3.

²² Of the remaining three, one had now decided that the school would not opt out, one did not provide a direct answer and the remaining school was not involved in my fieldwork post- Reorganisation.

²³In accordance, ten out of the thirteen primary heads interviewed believed that competition did not exist.

²⁴ E.g. one secondary had a considerable reputation for dealing with special educational needs consequently becoming a "magnet school" in this respect; another perceived itself in the tradition of the old grammar schools and was appealing to parents on that level.

²⁵ This meant pupils would have to transfer to another school to complete their primary education.

²⁶For example in Grampian, three- fifths of the education budget went to secondary sector, whereas the 280 primaries received the remaining two- fifths.

²⁷ CC:... do you identify more with (X) Division than Strathclyde...?

SRCPS6: Yes.

CC: Do you identify at all with Strathclyde?

SRCPS6: Well, not particularly.

²⁸ SRCPS1: ... are you talking about the Divisional offices?

CC: No, the Centre.

SRCPS1: What centre?

CC: Strathclyde.

SRCPS1: Strathclyde as head quarters... (and then proceeds to talk about Division).

²⁹In Highland, the staffing budget had not been involved during the first phase interviewing, hence the lack of Highland's heads commenting on the 'staffing agency' issue. Nevertheless, the majority of heads interviewed wished the EA to remain responsible for staffing, especially amongst primary heads.

³⁰Being referred to by only five out of the thirty- seven interviewees.

³¹"before the relationship was like a horse (school) and rider (EA). It was not an equal partnership" (GRCPS3HT).

³² "We see ourselves very much as a Strathclyde school, implementing it's policies. We don't see ourselves as being chief officer, and we're not interested in being that... I think we have some humility, we recognise that we are not running a private school". (SRCSS2).

CHAPTER 10

TOWARDS AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

This chapter draws on issues from the previous chapters to explore the conceptualisation of the education system, especially related to DSM and Reorganisation. According to my review of secondary and primary material concerning the development of the Scottish education system, it is alleged that three key discourses have been promoted and pervasive, 'Scottishness', 'Partnership' and 'Efficiency'. These will be re-considered following my review and research. The latter discourse combines notions of 'management' and 'markets', which must be juxtaposed with the concepts and existence of 'hierarchy' and 'networks'. Therefore, it is with these conceptual issues and explorations that this chapter is concerned. Pervading these concerns is the issue of 'decentralisation', especially in relation to 'centralisation'. More fundamentally, there is the underlying theme of the influence of structure and agency on the education system, the need for 'reform', its nature, policy and process (Taylor *et al* 1997). The implications for the study of education policy, future practice and research are considered.

Considering 'Discourse'

In social science research, 'objective facts' are untenable (Sayer 1992). In my review of the education system's historical development, it is not simply the practical 'facts' which are relevant, but the manner in which these have been perceived and conceptualised. The discourse and theorisation surrounding the developments of the education system have served to not only structure explanation and conception of that system, but also to advocate and determine what is acceptable practice. Discourse is crucial in the formulation and dissemination of policy, as well as in the discursive strategies of those implementing policy. Although no discourse is without contention, the power and promotion of specific discourses have strength as an explanation of what is and promoting what should be. Therefore, discourse can be both facilitating and constraining.

In recent years, the 'language' adopted within the education and local government systems has changed (Bowe & Ball 1992, Bridges & McLaughlin, 1994, Burns *et al*

1994, Ranson & Stewart 1994, Taylor *et al* 1997, Walsh 1995). While such shifts may be “cosmetic”, there is an assumption that they are becoming sufficiently pervasive to suggest wider “cultural” shifts (Burns *et al* 1994:3-4). Indeed, the use of language may be purposive to create change (Walsh 1995). The content and nature of discourse adopted will articulate the specific interpretation of ‘reform’ required, the structural conditions governing this and the capacity for agency response.

While studying language can be problematic in terms of uncovering ‘reality’ (Sayer 1992), it is nonetheless important, especially if ‘reality’ is perceived as being ‘socially constructed’ and discursively articulated (Berger & Luckmann 1967, Gunnarsson *et al* 1997, Mair 1998). Pollitt (1990:10) explains:

the links between beliefs, attitudes and behaviour are complex. Notoriously, words may be a poor guide to deeds... Yet some divergence between normative models and actual behaviour... does not destroy the point that ideology can, and often does, provide the *justification* for some particular course of action. The justification may be pre- or post- hoc, but it is legitimisation none the less.

Discourses are ‘expressive and explanatory’, they offer moral prescriptions and indicate the ‘assumptive worlds’ of their advocates (Mair 1998, McPherson & Raab 1988, Raab 1994b) and they purport legitimacy (Burton & Carlen 1997, Hajer 1989, Howarth 1995, Taylor *et al* 1997). Discourses may be presented as universal, yet they are partial explanations of reality related to specific values and ideals. It is the promotion of these values as guidance and justification for practice and understanding that is important.

Discourses present as universal specific arguments and rely on particular definitions of concept and context. Apple (1993:49) explains:

Concepts do not remain still for very long. They have wings... and can be induced to fly from place to place. It is this context which defines their meaning.

Taylor *et al* (1997:4-5) argue that the state constructs conceptualisations of “social, political, economic and cultural changes” via a specific “rhetorical language of

reform” in order to generate and legitimate their preferred reform strategy. Varying interpretations and justifications of ‘Scottishness’, ‘Partnership’ and ‘Efficiency’ were used by Central Government to promote both DSM and Reorganisation, plus associated reforms¹. Furthermore, such tactics to promote certain changes and resist others occurs throughout the education and local government systems, as evident in teachers’ resistance to ‘anti- Scottish’ and ‘anti- Partnership’ opting out and SRC’s re-interpretation of DSM from a ‘competitive, English’ model to a ‘collective, Scottish’ one. The nature of policy and its context can be constructed in accordance with desired outcome, thus the process of change and reform are not straight- forward (Elmore & McLaughlin 1988, Seddon 1994):

the situation may be more complex than this, with contradictory pressures either supporting or inhibiting progressive change, pressures which must on the one hand be *managed* by governments, and on the other be strategically *used* by activists. (Taylor *et al* 1997:164).

Hence, the study of discourse facilitates an understanding of the “politics of change” and how the “wider cultural context become articulated in policies” which are “linked” also “to local traditions of reform” (*ibid*:167). One can discern the discursively articulated ‘structure’ and ‘agency’, and explore policy, process, perception and practice:

Applications of discourse theory allow valuable fine- grained analyses of policy documents to be undertaken within a broader structural analysis. The approach is also useful in highlighting values and teasing out competing discourses, both in the development and implementation stages of the policy process. (Taylor *et al* 1997:43)

This approach is useful in attempting to understand DSM and Reorganisation.

Discourse and Conceptualisation in the Scottish Education System

My review of the historical system of Scottish education suggested that three broad discourses have been utilised to conceptualise its nature. Although each discourse is distinctive and has a historical dimension, in practice they may persist and interact.

From the origins of the system, the 'Scottish myth' was based on language of egalitarianism, democracy, equity and meritocracy. McPherson and Raab (1988) demonstrate how this discourse influenced important Scottish officials whom, through the 'Kirremuir career' thesis, were able to promote such beliefs and practices during the post- world period also. The 'Scottish myth' claims to be universal, but this is within the boundaries of the history and culture of Scotland. It is therefore quite a specific discourse. By contrast, the discourse of 'partnership' promoted since the post-war settlement has a British dimension. 'Partnership' implies the linking of central and local government responsibility in the education system. Other partners have since been included, such as teachers and arguably parents (Briault 1976, Munn 1993). The values espoused are a 'national system, locally administered' and 'equality of opportunity'. Both discourses are partial and particular depictions of the education system. Nevertheless, both have been pervasive at the level of discourse generating popular conception of the education system, although they may be more idealistic than universally realistic. Both discourses received severe criticism by the 1970s.

Along with the economic, social and educational demands of the mid- 1970s, there was a need to construct a new 'consensus' around a conceptualisation of the education system. McPherson & Raab (1988:488) explain:

Such a consensus was no longer provided by the Scottish myth and the Kirremuir career... hence, one might argue, the protracted attempt to reconstruct a consensus after 1974 in the negotiation and development of the Standard Grade. Hence, too, the growing emphasis on implanting management techniques and organisation at all levels of the system as a way of fostering common understandings.

Although my research is concerned with the later development, I posit that with the reconstruction of the curriculum as a mechanism of performance measurement within a market system (Bowe & Ball 1992, Cordingly & Wilby 1987, Simon 1988, 1992), both curriculum and management changes have been endorsed and conceptualised within a common discourse of 'economy, efficiency and effectiveness'. This is the discourse associated with the rise of NPM and New Right influence of government policy, especially post- 1979. In essence, this is the broadest discourse of the three as

it has a global dimension. Nevertheless, the 'efficiency' discourse is also a partial and particular conceptualisation drawing on limited evidence and presenting these as universal 'truths'. Furthermore, the promotion of this discourse may be undermined by the ongoing influence of the previous counter-arguments of Scottishness and Partnership advocating a professional, collective education system.

Scottish Myth/ Dimension

Historically, the Scottish education system is perceived as distinctive (Gray *et al* 1983, Humes 1983, McPherson 1983, McPherson & Raab 1988, Scotland 1977, Scottish Centre for Economic and Social Research 1989). This distinctiveness was based upon the structural, practical and importantly cultural nature of the Scottish system. This culture emphasised the value of education which should be broad based and widely available. It is a social conception of education, which advocates consensus among participants, collective provision and community development. Although the delivery of education was decentralised spatially, there is a 'consensus' that a 'centralisation' of control and direction was acceptable due to Scotland's physical smallness, its cultural cohesiveness, the later development of local government and the 'anthropological' nature of the Scots to look to the Centre for a lead (Boyd 1997, McPherson & Raab 1988, Scotland 1977).

It has been argued that the Scottish dimension has been eroded over time. During the 1960s and 1970s, curriculum reform, managerial changes, comprehensivisation, the politicisation of education and erosion of teachers' professionalism served to undermine the traditional practices of Scottish education. This 'attack' on the 'Scottish myth' was furthered post- 1979 with the failure of the devolution bill generating a 'crisis in Scottish identity' influencing its culture reflected in the education system (Grant 1982, Robertson 1984). This 'crisis' was compounded by the advent of 'Thatcherism' seeking to construct a British hegemonic project rejecting the notions of collectivism intrinsic to the 'Scottish myth'. With Thatcher as Prime Minister and especially Forsyth as Education Minister, a programme reforming and arguably anglicising Scottish education began (Humes 1995, Fisher 1988, Paterson

1997). Reforms included parental choice, school boards, opting out, the Howie Report advocating the end of Highers, and national testing.

However, despite numerous challenges to Scottish distinctiveness and attempts to coordinate policy in Britain, there remains belief and evidence that Scotland is different, in terms of its structure, institutions, policy community and wider political and social culture (Clark & Munn 1997). My interviewees noted the existence of protection for teachers' terms and conditions, the GTC, classroom sizes, the standardised system and the persistence of Highers as practical differences. The 'comprehensive ideal' was argued to be more pervasive in practice and belief than in England, being linked in Scotland to a cultural belief in schooling and collective provision for the community. Interviewees argued that in Scotland notions of competition and markets were 'alien', whereas the idea that education is a public good with communitarian benefits was widespread. There was belief also that education should be structured and provided through a 'partnership' involving the EA. Arguably, this distinctive culture serves to resist and require re-interpretation of perceived inappropriate education policies. Hence, the initial reluctance by parents to exercise 'choice' (Adler *et al* 1987,1989). The modifications of national testing; evolution of school boards away from 'consumer control' (Fisher 1988, Munn 1993); and the reluctance to opt out (Adler *et al* 1996, Raab *et al* 1997, SLGIU 1995).

Research, including my own, suggests that market models have met with resistance in Scotland (Adler *et al* 1996, Arnott 1993, Arnott *et al* 1993a, Arnott & Munn 1994, Clark 1997a, Deem 1994, Munn 1997a, Raab 1993b, Paterson 1997, Pignatelli 1994). This has affected the policy, process, perception and practice of DSM. When introducing DMR, Strathclyde officers were aware that many educationalists would resist this policy as it was perceived as 'English' and unnecessary. Hence, the need for SRC to "amend" the idea of devolving school management "to take account of our, the Scottish dimension, and to try to influence it for the good" (SRCEO4), via linking it to a 'community development model' which avoided the 'pitfalls of LMS'. The acceptance of such an approach eased the national development of DSM, which Central Government promoted also as adhering to the 'Scottish dimension'.

Consequently, from the outset, a range of practical differences between DSM and LMS were created (Arnott & Munn 1994, Arnott *et al*, 1993a, Clark 1997a, Munn 1997a, Raab *et al* 1997). In the emerging practice, teachers perceive DSM as 'superior to LMS' and as avoiding 'mechanistic' and 'market-driven' approaches, by retaining a belief in a collective, co-operative and public-orientated system. By contrast, the failure to re-interpret GMS to accord with the 'Scottish dimension' has resulted in its perception as "an English measure enforced on the Scottish system" (HRCPS2) and consequently resisted.

A common theme is that Scottish education is 'superior' to the English system. One head teacher commented that internationally Scotland may not be the best "but it's certainly better than our neighbours". The practical nature of the system was perceived as superior. Furthermore, there was an assumption of cultural diversity between the countries, with Scotland characterised as collectivist, egalitarian, equitable and communitarian, while England was individualistic, selfish, competitive and market-orientated. These arguments were pervasive but originated from general, stereotypical assumptions:

there's a lack I think in England of community feeling and the idea that education is a public good, to be supplied through the local authority, publicly accountable. If you take the example of private schools, they really don't exist very much in Scotland... Whereas in England it's quite a big percentage. And I think there's a certain political element that perhaps England got into the 'Essex Man'... you know the kind of self-centred, trample to get what you want, only interested in yourself... Whereas in Scotland there's much more of a concern for everyone, for neighbours, for working with people. (NLEO1).

Humes (1983:151) argued the only manner in which Scotland was homogeneous was in "resistance to English cultural imperialism". My research suggests that there is capacity for and existence of diversity within Scotland, but overall the key similarity is in a sense of 'Scottishness' which influences perceptions, policies and practices, plus mediating alternative discourse such as economic interpretations of 'efficiency'.

The extent to which Scotland actually is distinctive requires further research (Clark & Munn 1997). There is a pervasive perception of distinctiveness which serves the 'myth's' function of being 'expressive and explanatory' and of resisting and re-interpreting policy. While this was perceived positively by the Scots interviewed, two Officers who had worked in England suggested 'Scottishness' indicated reluctance to grasp change and to challenge traditional practices. In terms of developing devolved management, Scottish heads were "very slow to grasp" the need to develop coherent, co-ordinated and rational management practices. One officer noted the reluctance to 'test the system':

It's a remarkable consensus, that significantly in the financial current, it still accepts the fiscal, interfering power of the centre.

The cornerstones of the Scottish system, resistance to Anglicisation, professionalism, collectivism, centralisation and consensus, were perceived by all but could be interpreted as either positive or negative compared to the 'efficiency' arguments of managerialism, entrepreneurialism, autonomy and globalisation.

The extent to which a 'Scottish dimension' could remain intact in light of these challenges is debatable, but thus far, it appears particularly resilient. One officer commented that the "forces that are going to push" the Scottish and English systems "are not totally dissimilar" based on markets and managerialism, but that "you've always got to be aware of the different cultural context. You should never forget that the Scottish education system is different.". Indeed, this distinctiveness was promoted to prevent 'universal' reform strategies: "I refer to England as a possibility in order that we can more effectively counteract it" (GRCSS3). The promotion and popularity of a 'Scottish dimension' was evident throughout my research, requiring reform to be promoted in such terms to gain greater acceptance.

Nevertheless, there was the beginning of suggestions that the Scottish dimension may erode over time. Universal discourses such as devolved management was 'good management' were gaining some appeal. The perception that Labour education policy may have some accordance with Conservative policies concerning managerial reform suggests that partisan resistance may diminish, "to an extent the shackles are off"

(GRCEO4). Furthermore, it is no longer simply a British context, but increasingly a global trend to decentralisation, economic and managerial reform which impacts on education and local government systems (Taylor *et al* 1997). These are issues which are relevant at present, but in many respects have been subsumed by the continuing perception of Scottish distinctiveness and capacity to mediate and re-interpret policies accordingly. However, these issues require greater investigation and consideration in future research of the evolving education system.

Gray *et al* (1983) questioned whether the 'Scottish myth' served to create collective identity and values or to serve specific sectional interests. In my research, it appears to have the dual purpose of making "the world intelligible... and ... thereby facilitate collective action" while also being "invoked as a mystifying justification of actions undertaken" (*ibid*:309- 310). The Scottish 'educational establishment' endorses the 'myth' but it serves to protect and promote their interests and to resist unwanted changes. It is value-based but has a collective dimension and popular appeal. Furthermore, specific elements and re-definitions of the 'myth' serve to promote particular policies also, e.g. SRC's DMR and Central Government's Parents' Charter. The 'myth' is broad and general, this makes it pervasive. However, it encompasses a dynamic quality. In literal terms and as representing reality, it may accord more with a pre-industrial era (McPherson 1983), but this does not render it impotent. The 'Scottish myth' premised on 'Scottish distinctiveness' remains a crucial and pervasive discourse combining beliefs, values and ideals which influence perception, policy and practice. However, one must be aware that its accordance with everyday reality may be partial and its internal character dynamic, requiring consideration of what definition of 'Scottishness' is being promoted, by whom, for what purpose and with what outcomes.

In my research, Scottishness was most often utilised as an argument against radical reforms, especially those relating to markets in the 'efficiency' discourse. Alternatively as a justification for accordingly re-interpreted 'appropriate' reform, such as community development and co-operative models. While 'Partnership' is a distinctive discourse, it is not completely discordant with 'Scottishness'. Indeed,

despite its British application, to an extent, there is greater accordance with 'Scottishness'. Both discourses accept the pursuit of 'equality of opportunity' and public provision. They emphasise hierarchy and networks, while resisting markets.

Partnership

Partnership implies the division of responsibility and distribution of power and influence (McPherson & Raab 1988). Traditionally, the partnership referred to central and local government. Partnership implies an "interdependence" (*ibid*), where two bodies must agree on common goals and have independent discretion. Hence, local government is not purely an agent of central government, but the latter must also "win the consent of the local authority" (*ibid*:3). The concept of partnership was extended to include schools (Briault 1976) and parents (Munn 1993). Partnership was perceived as advantageous in facilitating more efficient service provision, an equitable distribution of power and enhancing (collective) decision-making (Chitty 1992). Partnership operated akin to a 'policy network' manifesting a hierarchy of legal responsibility but a network of influence and diffusion of power (Levacic 1993b).

It is argued that from the 1970s, the Government has sought to end the 'partnership' and assert central authority (Raab 1993a). Tensions between notions of partnership, centralisation and decentralisation are ongoing. In the education system, the attack on the 'educational establishment' and legislation such as parental choice are cited as eroding partnership (Adler *et al* 1989, Coulby 1989, Maden 1992, Raab 1993a, Robertson 1984, Simon 1992). In local government, the reorganisation of the 1970s affected the partnership (MacBeth 1983, McPherson & Raab 1988). In practice, it is argued that increased centralisation in both education and local government has occurred since the 1970s. The final break in partnership is perceived as the ERA and subsequent legislation in England and Wales (Levacic 1993b). Baker's 'wheel metaphor' advocated a role for central government, schools and parents, not LEAs (Chitty 1989). The traditional 'policy network' was to be replaced by hierarchical control and market relationships (Levacic 1993b). Nevertheless, related research outlining the future role of LEAs suggests the need for 'partnership', albeit in a reformed sense, e.g. the Government's vision of 'enabling' (Adams & Hunter 1994,

Audit Commission 1989, Coopers & Lybrand Deloitte 1992, Cordingley & Riley 1992, Gee & Maden 1988, Ranson 1992, Riley 1996). In Scotland, the break with partnership is evident (Adler *et al* 1989, Raab 1993a), but arguably not as extreme given the concessions and perhaps unintended consequences of policies such as school boards (Fisher 1988). Indeed, the Government in Scotland used the rhetoric of 'partnership' to promote and justify reform, although this favoured parents and undermined the traditional 'education community' (*ibid*, Scottish Office 1991a). Both DSM and Reorganisation are altering further the division of responsibilities and power relationships within the education system.

McPherson (1989) argued partnership relied on a 'principal/ agent' relationship, where local government is both an agent of central government and a principal in its own right. He believed that DSM would strengthen the former and undermine the latter. In practice, DSM has not undermined the EA as much as may have been anticipated. EAs have many statutory and discretionary roles in supporting DSM and more widely the education system. Although the metaphor of 'partnership' may be problematic, schools supported the notion of a 'symbiotic relationship' more than a 'voluntary' one. Schools were aware of the potential to opt out and used this as a means to increase their power over the EA. They realised that DSM had increased their power within the education system, believing that the 'partnership' was now becoming more equitable. However, they wished to retain the involvement of the EA for an extensive list of service and support roles. As with the principle of partnership, an interdependent relationship exists in perception and practice.

Reorganisation raised the possibility of undermining EAs (Munn 1997b). However, EAs have emerged and are seeking to define and defend their role. In this process, the discourse of partnership is invoked frequently by officers. The experience of the 1970s reorganisation suggests that the new smaller authorities may be less able to resist centralisation and that the Regions may have been abolished on this basis. However, there remains popular support for EAs among educationalists. The new EAs are striving to reform partnership to a more appropriate and acceptable form. Emerging relationships are argued to be more 'open', 'close' and 'equitable'. Officers

and head teachers are to work together, in some cases perceiving the teachers as 'officers of the authority' (COAEO1). One officer advocated:

if you think about a business partnership, then you have an understanding of who does what to achieve a desired objective and an agreed principle.

However, the clear specification of 'relative roles' is problematic in education, as evident in SRC's experience of INLOGOV and DMR. Another officer referred to the need to develop "professional trust and respect for each others roles", which is more traditional and amenable than the formal 'agreement' of business partnership. Shifts in power and relationships and a 'network' of influence were emerging. Officers argued the need to be less "elitist" and more "equitable", but fundamentally, elements of hierarchy remain:

the relationship is different than you would have found say ten years ago, when it was very much the dominant authority and head teachers subservient. Although there has to still be a line management aspect, I think it's a much more equal partnership. (COGEO1).

Ultimately the EA retains control. Although consultation and co-operation exist, the 'framework' is established by the EA. Nevertheless, that the schools have some capacity to challenge and consult with the EA suggests shifts in the relationship.

Amongst my interviewees and commentators, there is a recognition of the need to develop the concept of 'partnership' (Raab 1993a). Relationships are emerging and evolving around concepts of markets, hierarchies and networks. The possibility of opting out places schools in a less dependent relationship with EAs. However, politically, culturally, philosophically and practically, many head teachers remain interdependent with and dependent on the EA. SRC promoted the notion of the 'symbiotic relationship' as a means to counter-act the potential abolition of EAs via Reorganisation. Symbiosis is a closer relationship than 'partnership', it was strongly supported at a time when the Government appeared to be attempting to 'weaken' the relationship. Yet, the Government had also to draw upon the metaphor of 'partnership' in an attempt to legitimate reform, although their vision of a parental partnership rejected the professional educational partnership and has not been especially popular in Scotland. Partnership has changed markedly over the post-war

period and has been re- defined in many ways. However, in developing and implementing education policy the triangular 'partnership' of central government, local government and school remains important and interdependent.

My research focuses on the local partners of school and EA, however there is need for further consideration of the traditional partnership of central and local government. The trends to decentralisation and centralisation impinge upon the nature and purpose of partnership. It is acknowledged that the discourse of 'partnership' is in many respects 'mythical', "imprecise" (McPherson & Raab 1988:499) and "hackneyed" (Regan 1977:35). However, it is a pervasive discourse and indicates the perception and practice of an interdependent and influential relationship at local level. The concept requires greater consideration, clarification and precision, but in its use as rhetoric and as a system of propositions "no other term would do so well" (*ibid*), as indicated by its continuing usage and advocacy.

Efficiency

The "virtuous three Es: economy, efficiency and effectiveness" (Pollitt 1990:59) have been applied to education and local government (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Lee 1990, Levacic 1995, McAlister & Connolly 1990, Meredith 1990). Of these an economic connotation of 'efficiency' has dominated. It has been argued that economic criteria and needs have become "meta- policy" therefore "policy options in other domains are framed and constrained by these new economic imperatives" (Taylor *et al* 1997:58, Pusey 1991, Yeatman 1990). However, the application of a narrow economic definition to the education system is controversial. There are various competing notions of efficiency which have been undermined. In local government traditionally there were concerns about participatory and service efficiencies. INLOGOV and SRC struggled to develop an education system that would be educationally, socially, managerially and economically efficient. Even within the constraints of the economic definition, it is difficult to objectively delimit and assess this in education, given the need for value judgements and the lack of precise information (Bowe & Ball 1992, Bullock & Thomas 1997, Levacic 1995, Walford 1993). Furthermore, alternative criteria may be more acceptable and important to those within the public sector, such

as 'need' and 'equality' (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Pollitt 1990, Ranson & Stewart 1994, Stewart 1989). Cordingly & Kogan (1993:101) argue:

The democratic, managerial and professional perspectives are corners of a triangle of forces... any system that does not make an adequate balance between the three is likely to be short of democratic input or expertise or efficiency.

Economic models cannot be the exclusive basis for reform, consideration of managerial issues, governance and the nature of the service are vital.

From my research, the notion of 'effectiveness' linked to values relating to the education and local government service were more popular and pervasive than straight-forward efficiency arguments: " We want to see more effective education" (HSS1). However, what precisely constitutes 'effective education' is controversial and problematic when linked to 'efficiency'. Levacic (1995: 39) explains:

The problem for those involved in educational management is understanding how the concept of efficiency and effectiveness can be applied fruitfully in educational institutions and integrated with more familiar concerns, particularly when there are competing definitions of what constitutes effective education.

The ideal of making education effective, within the values of educationalist, was widely supported, but differed from economic notions of efficiency.

The New Right link size and efficiency believing that small scale and lean structures are preferable (George & Wilding 1994). Hence, Reorganisation and advocacy of 'enabling' (Midwinter & McGarvey 1993). Decentralisation is encouraged. Furthermore, policies of DSM are supported by the belief that a 'self-managing school' is most efficient (Caldwell & Spinks 1988). However, research suggests that to date only limited efficiencies have been made in the education system (Bowe & Ball 1992, Bullock & Thomas 1997, DfE 1992, Levacic 1995, Walsh 1995). Evidence indicates potential improvements in managerial and financial 'efficiency', but little improvement in 'participatory efficiency' and 'educational efficiency' linked to the 'effectiveness' of teaching and learning. This is similar to my findings, although even

financial and managerial efficiencies have been limited. This is an issue requiring further research throughout the development and evolution of the reformed systems.

The Government proposed that DSM would improve decision- making, taking regard of local needs and priorities, increase accountability and therefore raise standards and service in education (SOED 1992c). Fundamentally:

Schools will therefore have a greater incentive to manage more efficiently and with due regard to economy, resulting in more effective use of resources and better value for money. (SOED 1992c: 2).

The extent to which true managerial efficiency has been achieved is dubious, due to under- developed, confused and conflicting lines of accountability and responsibility. In straight- forward, economic terms: “it’s always going to cost more to organise this kind of thing, than it was when it was almost more or less centrally controlled in the past” (HRCEO3). Decentralised systems can be costly to implement and operate, therefore an ongoing issue is whether long- term efficiency can be achieved and on what criteria.

Issues of scale, appropriateness and efficiency were central to Reorganisation. Wheatley argued that small- scale authorities were inefficient (SLGIU 1995). The Reorganisation of the 1990s suggested the converse - that the Regions were inefficient and that small- scale unitary authorities would be more ‘efficient’, ‘cost- effective’ and create ‘value for money’ (Scottish Office 1991a, 1993b). Integral to the proposed Reorganisation was the perception that the new authorities would be more efficient and therefore create savings (McVicar *et al* 1994). The differing perceptions are political rather than pragmatic given the difficulty of determining the optimum scale and operation of local government (Midwinter & McGarvey 1994). Central to creating efficiency is the promotion of the ‘enabling authority’ whereby they may no longer be direct service providers. However, amongst my interviewees there remained support for EA services and a very broad definition of ‘enabling’. Officers tended to adopt the discourse of ‘enabling’ more than teachers who advocated a range of detailed, important and often interventionary roles for EAs. Even the EA purporting to an ‘enabling model’, East Renfrewshire, provides services and is very involved with its

schools. Indeed, the small scale EAs were in many respects more involved with schools than the Regions, due to the capacity for 'closeness' and centralisation. The 'enabling model' was not emerging as anticipated.

Interviewees recognised that there were problems with the Regional structures, e.g. lack of clarity, communication and bureaucracy. However, thus far, Reorganisation had not fully resolved these and in some cases had compounded problems. The perceived benefits of Reorganisation to develop a more adequate, appropriate, responsive and communicative service were under-developed in many instances, but may emerge over time. Furthermore, economic efficiency was not evident given the cost of Reorganisation, the failure to be 'revenue neutral' and the impact of budget cuts. Many interviewees did not believe that small scale was more efficient, especially given the ongoing service principle. It was argued the relatively larger EAs would be more efficient. Consequently, some interviewees believed that true economies of scale could only be achieved at a national level, although this may undermine 'efficiency' in terms of local responsiveness. The idea of larger scale but leaner structures was promoted as being most efficient. It was suggested that efficiency was unachievable also due to conflicts in Government policy. Reorganisation was to create single-tier authorities with lean structures and clarity of roles. However, the Schemes of Decentralisation were manifesting bureaucratic structures and confusion. In creating economy, EAs were to rationalise school places, yet opting out provided a potential 'get out clause' for schools. The political principle of efficiency was being hindered by conflicting policies.

Ball (1993:77- 78) argued the discourse associated with recent reforms resulted in shifts in attribution of blame and moral responsibility:

There is a shift of institutional focus from the cuts themselves to the ways of coping with cuts, a shift to dealing with what you can control rather than what you can't.

This is pertinent to the ongoing development of DSM and the perceived diminishing of benefits and 'empowerment', as a head teacher commented:

we're being asked to do the same job with less money. And that's always been a worry about DSM... it would allow whoever to give the schools responsibility for managing cuts rather than being upfront and honest in terms of the whole Council. To a certain extent, that's what they've done. Manage a cuts package.

In the emerging experience of DSM and Reorganisation, especially within budgetary constraints, it is plausible that both a 'fiscal' and 'legitimisation crisis' have been attributed to the local level (Ball 1993, O'Connor 1973). Nevertheless, many interviewees were aware that their situation was the result of mainly central government decisions and economic constraint. The extent to which shifts in the relationship between the 'central' and 'local state' and how these are popularly perceived requires further research.

The language of 'efficiency' has been promoted and pursued. It is controversial for its economic and deterministic assumptions. This is not to suggest that issues of 'efficiency', 'effectiveness', 'value for money' and so on have no place in the public sector. Indeed, in a time of reform and constraint, these are central issues and valid considerations (Bartlett & LeGrand 1993, George & Wilding 1994). What is contentious however, is the pursuit of primarily economic criteria with no 'sensitivity' or consideration of the specific needs and values of the education and local government systems. Little consideration has been given to the philosophical, moral and practical limitations to the pursuit of 'efficiency' in the public sector. Although the discourse of efficiency has been pervasive, especially from central government sources, its linkage with 'effectiveness' is controversial and its undermining of alternative values, such as those associated with Scottishness and Partnership, problematic, resulting in the mediation of 'management' and 'markets' by those at the local level. Purely economic pursuit of 'efficiency' was rejected and politically opposed, in particular through the discourses of 'partnership' and 'Scottishness' which it was believed that efficiency-orientated reforms would destroy (Corsar 1994, Hart 1994, Kirk 1995, Maginnis 1994).

Management

My research supports that among educationalists, 'management' is generally more acceptable than 'market' reforms (Bowe & Ball 1992), substantiating:

Managerialism is the 'acceptable' face of the new- right thinking concerning the state. It... can attract support beyond the new right itself. For that wider constituency 'better management' sounds sober, neutral, as unopposable as virtue itself. (Pollitt 1990: 44).

DSM was supported as premised on 'better management' by all officers interviewed, supported by local politicians accordingly, and advocated by many head teachers. Furthermore, as Bowe & Ball (1992:157) argued, this belief in the supremacy, rationality and ameliorative functions of better management legitimated changed and generated a belief that a better system would emerge in time:

the view that current structures and process of management are not quite right and do not work - but with the appropriate changes things could be 'got right'.

Officers and teachers expressed this view that future developments and changes would ultimately be beneficial to schools and EAs. Nevertheless, 'management' was not uncontroversial, especially in its implications for the 'educational' and 'professional' nature of the education system. The appearance of 'management' as neutral and rational belies the fact that there are various competing approaches to 'management' (Ball 1993) relating to differing values. The 'management' reforms espoused by New Right and NPM embody values that may be distinctive from those inherent in the education system.

All the policy features of NPM , charges, contracts, internal markets, devolving financial control and agencies (Walsh 1995), have affected education often due to or compounded by DSM and Reorganisation. Free public education remains in principle and practice. However, due to budgetary constraints and political decisions, charging is increasingly being used for non- statutory services at school- level. Vouchers have been introduced for nursery education. Arguably, DSM creates a "pupil- as- voucher system" (Thomas & Bullock 1994:41), although the practice of schools competing for pupils and parents exercising choice was severely limited in my findings. However, the use of internal charging between school and EA was developing. This links with

the development of contractual relationships. CCT was being extended throughout the local government system. In City of Glasgow, there was the proposition that schools should gain greater client management functions. Many of the EAs were creating contractual and service-level agreements for services to schools. Hence, an internal market was developing within EAs, between EAs and between school and EA. Several head teachers perceived themselves as a 'client' of the EA and enjoyed the power and influence involved. However, no head teacher expressed the related issue that the EA was also the client of the school's educational provision, i.e. on behalf of pupils (Levacic 1992, 1995). While schools were aware that their key function was the delivery of education, this was perceived in a professional and sometimes paternalistic manner, not as a market or business activity. Managerial issues were related more to the devolution of finance than the educational function. Walsh (1995:173) argued that education was the most extreme example of devolving finance, "creating a genuine pattern of bottom-up control". However, although some managerial powers and responsibilities have been devolved, complete 'control' has not and schools are placed in a system of hierarchy and 'line management' (as indicated by officers). Hence, the acceptance of 'freedom within a framework'. This suggests that while 'agencies' are possible in education, especially via opting out, few schools in Scotland were attracted to this route. Furthermore, given the continuing desire for a supportive, local and democratic EA, its replacement by an 'agency' would be extremely unpopular. Therefore, policies according with the NPM have been introduced with varying degrees of success and influence. Contracts and managerial concerns are gaining application, but limits on 'business management' practices remain due to beliefs linked to 'Scottishness', 'partnership' and education.

A means to combine educational concerns with managerial decisions is arguably via the emergence of school development planning (Ball 1993, Levacic 1995). Previous research demonstrated that school development planning is at a range of stages and frequently there is a lack of integration between educational and resource decisions (Adler *et al* 1996, Bowe & Ball 1992, Bullock & Thomas 1997, DfE 1992b, HMCI 1994, Levacic 1995, MacGilchrist *et al* 1995). My research supports these conclusions. In Strathclyde, schools were required to link DMR and the SDP,

consequently the process was most developed here. The secondary schools in Grampian had also begun such a process. A range of procedures were adopted, generally involving consultations with staff, identifying priorities, developing strategies (usually linked to educational needs) and consequently resourcing and pursuing such strategies. At its most effective, this could create a management approach that facilitated DSM to enhance education:

the budget, learning and teaching, development, are all inextricably woven, one thing feeding the other. And I think decisions are much more informed for that reason. (SRCSS3).

However, the extent of linkage varied and in the remaining schools was non-existent.

The advocacy of 'rational management' (Coopers & Lybrand 1988, Levacic 1995) via DSM had not been realised. The principles and practices of 'managerialism' have been undermined and mediated in education (Taylor *et al* 1997). Similarly, although the development of strategic and operational management has been widely promoted (Hughes 1994, INLOGOV 1989, Levacic 1995, Ranson 1992, Ranson & Stewart 1994, Stewart 1989, Pollitt 1990), it has proved problematic to achieve. The complex and changing environment inhibits rational practices (Bowe & Ball 1992). Management decisions require technological change and support (Walsh 1995), e.g. the provision of information, but the experience of DSM has demonstrated problems. There is a need for training (*ibid*), which head teachers have not received or is currently inadequate. These practical factors mitigate the development of management in education, demonstrating the complexity of management in practice compared to ideal prescriptions.

Fundamentally, management requires the development of a pervasive culture (Ball 1993, Coopers & Lybrand 1988, Farnham & Horton 1993, Walsh 1995). Arguably, this has been most difficult to achieve in the education system (Bowe & Ball 1992). The idea that private management techniques can be readily implanted on the public sector is controversial (Ball 1993, Boyd 1997, Stewart 1989). A minority of secondary schools perceived themselves as 'businesses' or becoming more business-like. This was due partly to DSM plus associated reforms where the school's role as an

employer and purchaser of services had been highlighted alongside a discourse of managerialism:

we didn't at anytime ever see ourselves as a business. But in actual fact when you become more involved with the business community, you recognise that you actually are talking the same language... performance indicators, development plans. (HSS2).

Nevertheless, it was emphasised that schools were in the 'business' of education and that these categories, while being combined, remained distinctive:

So I think that people's perceptions of school, while they must retain it is an educational establishment, there's another side to things now. (SCRs).

However, for many head teachers, especially in primaries, business and management could not and should not be combined. While some 'business' techniques may be being applied, there remains a strong assumption that education has distinctive values and practices, which must be integral to the rationale of reform (Stewart 1989). In many respects, such as the disjunction in discourse, the emphasis on teaching and the avoidance of an economic, private sector management style, a 'gap' between management and education is pervasive (Ball 1993, Bowe & Ball 1992).

Generally, pure 'business management' and 'entrepreneurial management' is not being adopted in Scottish education, rather the perception and emergence of 'professional' and 'specialist' management is utmost. Ball (1993:67) explains that "professional management" is "in many ways... the acceptable face of management... it concentrates upon the business of *education* rather than education as *business*". From the 1970s, the Government had presented managerial arguments to erode 'professionalism' in local government and education (Paterson Report 1973) and recent reforms have been perceived similarly (Cordingley & Kogan 1993). In Scotland, the themes of "unbridled managerialism" and "deprofessionalism" have been challenged (Hart 1994, Maginnis 1994). To some extent, they have been circumvented by the emergence of 'professional management', allegedly even for budgeting procedures. The necessity of a 'professional' and 'educational' manager is adopted to advocate the need for a distinctive Director of Education as opposed to a 'business manager' of 'generic manager':

I don't think you can bring somebody who is a successful Marks & Spencer manager into Education. That's why the health service collapsed. (NLEO1).

The extent to which education is distinctive, specialist and professional requires further research, as does the extent to which managerial drives can be adopted and accommodated. Fundamentally, what constitutes a 'professional manager'?

In EAs, there was a perception that "there's much, much more management talk... now than there ever was" (COAEO1). EAs were aware of their need to 'manage the system' in strategic terms and to 'manage' their relationships with schools. Officers perceived that they must demonstrate that they "add value to the education process" (SLEO1). Increasingly, there was the encouragement that head teachers should "view themselves as being managers of the establishment"(COGEO2). There was a perception that to date, head teachers enjoyed limited managerial powers but attributed ultimate responsibility to the EA. In future it was argued "with devolved management comes devolved responsibility" (AEO1). The extent to which head teachers welcomed this move was contentious. Increased managerial power could enhance 'management', 'empowerment', 'autonomy' and 'efficiency'; however, it may conflict with the educational priorities of head *teachers*. Furthermore, in a period of increasing expectations and declining resources, it raises questions about devolving a 'legitimation' and 'fiscal crisis' (Ball 1993,1994, Bowe & Ball 1992, Taylor *et al* 1997).

The head teacher's identity was being challenged, changed and sometimes confused. For some heads, the combination of 'professional', 'educational' and 'managerial' roles was easier achieved than for others. There were concerns about how these roles would develop and the emergence of conflicting roles and demands, e.g. voiced as 'line manager', 'participative manager', 'educational leader', 'chief executive', 'curriculum leader', 'personnel manager', 'financial manager' and most popularly 'head teacher'. Especially in primaries, the emergence of "fragmented roles" (GRCPS1) was perceived as problematic. It was stressed the managerial should not undermine the 'educational'.

Nevertheless, head teachers were not autonomous managers. Despite the EA's propositions that increased managerial powers and responsibilities would be devolved, head teachers perceived increasing constraint on their managerial powers due particularly to budgetary constraint and centralising decisions of the EA. DSM is only partial managerial decentralisation, which occurs within the wider 'framework' of local and central government decisions which determine issues such as appropriate outcomes, teaching and learning approaches, budget levels and the scope within which school-level 'management' can occur. It has been "suggested that such a managerialist construction of devolution is more about 'efficient site management' in schools than about democratic participation for educative ends" (Taylor *et al* 1997:87, Angus 1993). Decentralisation is always a relative term (Smith 1985) and the conceptualisation of 'managed decentralisation' (Curtain 1992) and the "dualistic centralising/ decentralising characteristic of managerialism in education" (Taylor *et al* 1997:83) is pertinent to understanding the Scottish system.

Devolved management does not imply school- level autonomy. Indeed, in the promotion of 'decentralisation/ centralisation' and the advocacy of 'rational' management, a hierarchical approach is possible. Hence, there may be a fundamental conflict between the emergence of 'professional management', manifesting hierarchy, and the advocacy of entrepreneurialism and markets. Furthermore, there is conflict between managerial arguments favouring 'producers' and market arguments for 'customers' (Bowe & Ball 1992). The combination of managerial and market reform requires careful consideration.

Market

According to "full- blooded libertarians" there should be neither "government schools" nor "compulsory schooling" (Green 1987:154). However, there is general recognition that education has 'neighbourhood effects' and 'externalities' requiring a 'safety net' of a minimal state involvement (Friedman 1962, George & Wilding 1985, Green 1987). Although controversial, education is generally perceived as a public good due to its inherent nature and value (Grace 1994, Tomlinson 1994, Tooley 1994). What remains debatable is the level and nature of public provision

(McLaughlin 1994, Morris 1994, Simkins *et al* 1992, Tooley 1994). Market forces and private provision are encouraged within an education system overseen by the Government, which may provide a “compulsory minimum” of provision (George & Wilding 1985:42). The Government’s role should be ‘enabling’ rather than ‘providing’ (George & Wilding 1994). Education vouchers, private ‘assisted places’ and parental choice and power are encouraged (*ibid*, Green 1987, Quicke 1988). Internal markets and contractual relations are to be created (Audit Commission 1988, George & Wilding 1994, Levacic 1995, Walsh 1995). Parents are to assert control over schools (Quicke 1988). LEAs are to be reformed to an enabling and efficiency market model (Midwinter & McGarvey 1993, Quicke 1988, Raab 1993b). All of these policies have been influential in British education policy generating the perceived promotion of an ‘education market’ (Cordingly & Wilby 1987).

However, a ‘pure market’ in education does not exist (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Busher & Saran 1993, Levacic 1995, Wallace 1993). Although market forces have been introduced, there have been some difficulties in their practice (Bowe & Ball 1992, Bullock & Thomas 1997, Cordingly & Kogan 1993, Levacic 1995, Morris 1994, Ranson 1992). Fundamentally, market values are perceived as inappropriate for the education system (Brighouse 1995, Bullock & Thomas 1997, Hughes 1994, Jonathan 1990, McLaughlin 1994, Pollitt 1990, Ranson & Stewart 1994, Taylor *et al* 1997, Tett 1993, Walsh 1995). It is argued that a ‘quasi- market’ is emerging in the public sector (Bartlett 1993, LeGrand & Bartlett 1993a), which differs from private sector markets in various ways, e.g. absence of the profit motive, ‘not- for profit’ organisations, consumers represented by ‘agents’, and consumer purchasing not based on cash (LeGrand & Bartlett 1993b). These features are evident in the emerging Scottish education system. However, the concept of ‘quasi- market’ requires greater research, consideration and clarification (Ball *et al* 1994, Bartlett *et al* 1994).

LMS is perceived as creating market forces due to the combination of financial delegation, formula funding, staffing delegation, open enrolment and performance indicators (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Davies & Ellison 1992, Thomas 1990, Thomas & Bullock 1994, Thomas *et al* 1989, Ranson & Thomas 1989). These features are inherent in DSM also. However, the extent to which market forces are emerging may

be being minimised and resisted in Scotland (Adler *et al* 1996, Arnott 1993, Arnott *et al* 1993, Arnott & Munn 1994, Clark 1997a, Deem 1994, Munn 1997a, Raab 1993b, Paterson 1997, Pignatelli 1994). In Scotland, the tradition and culture of centralisation, co-operation and collectivism undermines the acceptance of 'individualism' and markets.

Although financial delegation has occurred, it is within a 'framework' established by the EA and Central Government. From the outset, DMR established strong central oversight. A 'pitfall of LMS' was perceived as "the degree of flexibility that Heads had down South" (SRCEO4), whereby national agreements could be breached. Consequently, the Scottish tradition of central oversight and ultimate control were manifest in the establishment of minimum standards and monitoring. The flexibility for local market forces to flourish was circumvented by hierarchical control and concern for collective equity. Similarly, although the Government are promoting predominantly pupil- related funding, the percentage involved is less in Scotland. Furthermore, EAs are striving to create 'equitable' and 'appropriate' formula, taking account of issues of local circumstances and need. As concerns staffing delegation, there is protection and non- market forces inherent in the Scottish system. The devolution of 'average' rather than 'actual' salaries was adopted by all Regions and argued to characterise a 'Scottish dimension'. Although the budget and responsibility for staffing were devolved, the EAs retained interventionary powers and acted as a 'staffing agency'. In all instances, potential market forces were tempered. However, research into the evolving situation post- Reorganisation is required, e.g. shifts in East Renfrewshire.

Similarly, while open enrolment is present in Scotland, it is not perceived as especially active nor as creating competition in general (Adler *et al* 1996, Raab *et al* 1997). An officer explained "competition among schools in Scotland is a totally new concept, and quite frankly to most of us, a very alien concept". The majority of head teachers believed that competition did not exist and was not pursued even in schools with falling rolls. Where 'competition' did occur it was argued to be marginal and 'good- willed'. The practice of competition may be necessary in some cases but the

over-arching ethos and discourse of 'competition' was rejected. Officers in City of Glasgow explained that open enrolment was prevalent for a minority of pupils. However, this was perceived as conflicting with the needs to plan and manage the service: "It's how far you can stem the market" (COGEO1). Market forces and competition were perceived as being driven by central government and were being resisted by those at the local level:

Scottish Office attempts to get schools into a market mode isn't taking in Scotland. I think that's because we are more interested in looking after everybody. (SRCSS2).

Where markets did operate there were attempts to make them appropriate to educational and professional activity and hence had an 'ethical' dimension (Bowe & Ball 1992, Levacic 1995). The scope for local resistance and re-interpretation of markets suggests the need for a more sophisticated concept than the assumption of universal and uniform markets - pure, quasi or internal (Ball *et al* 1994, Bartlett *et al* 1994, Bowe & Ball 1992, Busher & Saran 1993, Levacic 1992,1993b, Propper *et al* 1994, Wallace 1993).

DMR was posited as a co-operative, community development, collectivist model which retained elements of Scottishness and Partnership. It was a deliberate attempt to create a different system from an 'education market'. SRCEO2 explained:

There are a lot of public concerns, as well as , if you like, self- interested political concerns, about where an absolutely unrestrained free market system takes you, and therefore, there is a constituency for the notion of empowering establishments to a much greater extent than we have done in the past, while still having some socially accountable authority holding the ring. Now that's what we think we've been doing.

The notion of 'freedom within a framework' was popular and pervasive. If this was a market system, it was heavily regulated and retained hierarchical characteristics.

Although market practices may be undermined, there is an argument that the language of markets and economics is becoming pervasive, undermining educational issues and manifesting profound culture shifts (Kenway *et al* 1993, Taylor *et al* 1997). There is evidence that 'economic' language is gaining in-roads in education, especially central

government pronouncements. However, the extent to which this is readily endorsed at the local level is controversial and ignores “the capacity of teachers to interpret such language elastically, and to domesticate it to properly educational ends” (McLaughlin 1994:164). The attempt to ‘domesticate’ market language is most evident in Strathclyde’s promotion of DMR. An officer explained that there was a perception that “bureaucratic paternalism” was bad but that the only alternative was a right-wing driven agenda of “markets”. However, drawing on Hambleton & Hoggett (1984), the officers believed that “you can have a reform of public sector provision in the context of non-market based approach”. An initial stage was to “let’s recognise we’ve got problems and let’s try and interpret the market or the market philosophy in a way that’s going to be helpful”. Hence, the reform was promoted partly by the transition to market imperatives but seeking to re-interpret and ameliorate these. There was a perception that “the Right had captured” many concepts which had relevance to education but had created a discourse that was unpalatable to many educationalists. Issues of “rigour”, “excellence”, “accountability”, “effectiveness”, “clients”, and “value for money” were perceived as relevant and required ‘domestication’ to an educational setting based on its needs:

if you’re Head of Department say in a secondary school... that’s exactly what you do, you try to get value for money... (so SRC officers) say to people ‘look, the environment’s changing, people’s expectation of us are changing, more pressure on us, we really need to find a way of getting through all this difficulty’. And that’s what we came up with.

A re-definition and re-interpretation of ‘markets’ and ‘management’ to create a discourse advocating public reform associated with the practical changes of DMR and educational restructuring. The approach appears to have been relatively successful, given the belief within Strathclyde and other Scottish EAs that devolving school management can occur without the creation of market forces, plus the maintenance of the values of ‘Scottishness’ and ‘Partnership’. The capacity for agency-level re-interpretation of discourse, creation of new discourses and their utility as a process for managing change is an area that requires further research.

The Strathclyde officers attempted to re-interpret the 'market discourse' into a more acceptable form. However, other interviewees adopted a different strategy, whereby the market discourse was rejected outright:

we don't believe in the kind of individual unit approach, the cost centre approach, we don't believe in the competitive. We feel it should be co-operative and fair, and identify need, and to try to keep them all in the family... We don't believe it's a market. We believe it's a social service. And I think that's a fundamental philosophical point. (AEO1).

Education was not a business and market reforms were to be resisted. Although the precise approach varied between EAs, there was a widespread belief that education was a *system*, hence schools did not want to opt out, should be *democratic*, therefore requiring an EA, and fundamentally was a *public* service. The sense and perception of 'publicness' was pervasive and influenced practice and perceptions of policies, nevertheless it is a concept which requires greater clarification and consideration in academic writings (Dunleavy & Hood 1994, Mair & Moore 1993, Prior 1993). The public nature of education is asserted and assumed, it must be explored and critiqued.

Within my research, the strong belief in a public education system and the continuing experience of centralisation, collectivism, a 'Scottish dimension' and 'partnership' all served to mediate the existence of an 'education market'. Consequently, market forces were not dominating as the New Right anticipated and many of their criticisms of "a state-run educational system" persist in practice, e.g. "systemic dependency", "complacency", "bureaucracy", and "protectionism... by professionals" (Bowe & Ball 1992:65- 66). In Scotland, an 'education market' per se does not exist, hierarchy persists and in some respects is being replicated and re-enforced, while other power shifts suggest potential 'networks' developing also.

Hierarchy

The notion that an 'education market' is emerging is widespread in English research (Bash & Coulby 1989, Bowe & Ball 1992, Chitty 1989, Flude & Hammer 1990, Levacic 1995, Simon 1988), operating akin to a quasi-market (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Levacic 1995, Walsh 1995). This has influenced analyses of the Scottish system

(Adler *et al* 1996,1997, Arnott 1993, Arnott *et al* 1993, Arnott & Munn 1994, Deem 1994, Raab 1993b, Pignatelli 1994). However, my research suggests the persistence of hierarchy also. As in historical practices, hierarchical arrangements are adopted to overcome the problems of markets (Mitchell 1993). A crucial issue becomes the extent to which education should be becoming pre- fixed and conceptualised in purely market terms as opposed to alternative possibilities. For example, Ball *et al*'s (1994: 112) discussion of 'post- bureaucratic organisation' offers potential:

cultural change highlights the way post- bureaucratic organisations attempt to shift from regimented and over- regulated regimes to ones that function on the principle of 'freedom within boundaries' (Hoggitt, 1991). Such regimes rely heavily upon socialisation processes within the organisation to ensure that personnel become, to a degree, self- regulating. Hence, the growing importance of 'managing the organisation's culture' (Schein, 1985).

This description appears to have greater accordance with the development of discourse and practice of Strathclyde's DMR and the Scottish acceptance of 'freedom within a framework', rather than inappropriately imposed market values and metaphors. Nevertheless, both 'quasi- markets' and 'post- bureaucratic organisations' are broad terms that require greater conceptualisation and empirical exploration.

Hierarchy is in some respects akin to 'partnership' as it involves the distribution of responsibility and power. However, hierarchy is always perceived as "a graded, vertical system of manager- subordinate relationship" (Hales 1993:88) and does not include the possibility of a more equitable or 'fluid' 'partnership'. Hierarchical management is linked to bureaucratic organisations, which have six key features:

a formalised employment relationship; an elaborate division of labour; a centralised, yet delegated system of decision- making; a vertical co-ordination and control system; a proliferation of rules; and focus on regularity, predictability and control. (*Ibid*: 90).

This is associated with the 'classic' form of public sector bureaucracy which the New Right and NPM inspired reforms sought to transform. Nevertheless, many of the above features remain evident in the present education system, although the existence of 'predictability' may be challenged.

Pertinent to my research is the debate as to whether bureaucracies are essentially decentralised or centralised. Hales (1993:92) explains that traditionally:

This vertical division of labour forms the backbone of a centralised, but delegated, decision-making system. Broad, strategic decisions are taken centrally, or at the 'top', whilst operating decisions of decreasing scope and constrained by broader policy are dispersed down the hierarchy. Thus, bureaucracy is 'decentralised' in the nominal sense that almost every employee takes some sort of decision (Pugh et al, 1968; Perrow, 1972) but is 'centralised' in the substantive sense that key decisions which set parameters for detailed operational decision-making are taken by a relatively small number of senior managers (Mintzberg, 1979; Rueschmeyer, 1986).

McDowall (1994) argued that if a centralisation of strategic management occurred, despite devolution of operational management, an overall centralisation of power may occur in education. In practice, such a process is both potential and emerging. Hales (1993:98) explains bureaucratic organisations exert control in various ways:

work may be organised 'bureaucratically' either through having the operating decisions taken centrally and transmitted as direct orders, or through the creation of standardised, formalised procedures by which decentralised operating decisions are guided. Thus, delegated operating decisions, albeit constrained by procedures, are regarded as 'decentralisation', and bureaucracy is deemed a 'decentralised' form of organisation.

This has linkages with DSM and the notion of 'freedom within a framework'. However, if sufficient school-level 'freedom' or 'flexibility' emerges this may differentiate it from classical bureaucracy and hierarchy.

Traditionally, the education system had a hierarchical character, this remains evident:

you have decentralisation down to school-level by virtue of devolved education management, to a certain extent. But schools still don't make policies, it's local authorities who still have to create policies in reaction to the frameworks developed... or required by the Scottish Office, on things like development planning and curriculum, and so on... we don't have a properly decentralised system at the moment at all. (GRCEO4).

The predominantly hierarchical structure of the education system constrains the scope for agency level autonomy. Hence, the resilience and reform of hierarchy affects the roles of schools and EAs, plus the relationship between the two. While markets may characterise external relations, the internal organisation may be hierarchical (McGuinness 1991, Williamson 1975) as evident in education (Ball 1993, Bowe & Ball 1992, Busher & Saran 1993, Levacic 1993a). A head teacher commented that she agreed with “democratic decision- making” in principle but in practice was concerned that the decisions would not be to her satisfaction. Managerial reforms have created hierarchy within schools (Boyd 1997, Munn 1997b). Within the centralising, collective and consensual traditions of Scottish education, there is evidence of hierarchy between school and EA also. Although internal markets and contractual relations had been created, there is still a sense of hierarchy and ‘vertical’ authority in the relationship. Inherent in the argument for a ‘symbiotic relationship’ was the notion that powers were changing and shifting, but that ultimately “line management” remained. Indeed, some head teachers argued the need for centralised control and co-ordination within the education system.

In the relationship emerging via DSM, a ‘market’ conception was limited and hierarchy prevalent. A balance between centralisation and decentralisation was to be struck: “I think that there has to be a certain amount of independence in the school, but also a certain amount of Central decision- making”. Officers believed that head teachers still ‘looked to the Centre’ for a lead and ultimate responsibility. However, at school- level there was awareness of the ‘interference’ of EAs. For example: its capacity to alter and control budget lines and procedures; resistance of certain local government departments to move to either a market- based or client- relationship; plus the increasing “closeness of monitoring” (SLSS1) which typifies bureaucratic organisations. A strategic EA and a devolved system based on ‘freedom within a framework’ had hierarchical characteristics and did not equate with autonomy. Nevertheless, such an approach was generally popular, although there were sometimes school- level frustrations at their ‘freedom’ being curbed. Furthermore, one head teacher believed that centralisation to national level may be appropriate to ensure uniformity, co-ordination and coherence in practices. There was a belief that

“the traditional line of command” (HSS1) should be maintained and consequently there were concerns about the implications of Schemes of Decentralisation which raised issues of lines of communication, responsibility, seniority and educational appropriateness. This is not to argue that no change had occurred. Head teachers believed that DSM had created greater flexibility than previously and that Reorganisation may create further shifts in power and relationship. Creating flexibility at school-level, e.g. through a cheque- book, and at EA level, through ‘flexible’ structures, were being considered.

Hales (1993:155) argues that due to perceived “environmental turbulence, organisations ‘decentralise or die’”. In public and private sectors, decentralisation has become promoted. However, there are a range of forms of decentralised structures and levels of managerial decentralisation. The present local government and education systems do not accord with ‘radical decentralisation’ (Hales 1993). While there is some evidence of “devolution”, Hales (1993:156) argues this requires specially recruited and trained “managers with generalist skills and orientations”, which is counter to the ethos and practice of the education system. The “partial decentralisation” of “Professional organisation” may offer scope (*ibid*:160), as many features are prevalent in education:

controlled recruitment, a professional division of labour, co-ordination and control based on professional standards and performance, and a ‘career- for-loyalty’ employment contract. (*Ibid*:161).

Professional managers have some freedom but are subject to performance control, therefore they are “free to run their own show, but not free to fail” (*ibid*:162). While this has resonance with the situation of head teachers, at present there is greater control exerted over schools than would be anticipated in a ‘professional organisation’. Unlike the premise that professional organisations are free “from external managerial control” because those external are not professional nor knowledgeable of the professionals’ work (*ibid*:161), for schools they are subordinate to the EA which is also a ‘professional’ and ‘educational’ body. The essence of ‘partnership’ was that all involved were ‘education professionals’ and could therefore

co- operate, this means that the capacity for schools to adopt 'professionalism' as a distancing strategy is limited.

From Hales' (1993) definitions, the emerging education system has similarities to 'Divisionalisation', which he perceives as an "alternative to decentralisation" (*ibid*:174). In some respects, schools are akin to divisions and EA to head office:

With functions.... duplicated across divisions, each operates as a semi-autonomous profit centre, or mini- company, responsible for its own operating and market decisions. The divisions are linked together by a head office or 'corporate' apex which controls the divisions, firstly through performance controls, and secondly through the controlled recruitment and appointment of divisional managers... Whilst day- to- day management is devolved to divisional heads, head office retains five strategic functions. These are: design and operation of the management information system for communicating performance standards and results; appointment and development of divisional managers; provision of support services which relate to corporate activities (e.g. public relations) or which would be inefficient if duplicated across divisions (e.g. finance, legal, personnel); allocation of financial resources between divisions; and strategic corporate decisions... thus, the divisionalised form injects a form of quasi- market discipline into the organisation, with head office acting as both market 'surrogate' (allocating resources) and supra- market arbitrator (making decisions about overall corporate interests) (*ibid*:174- 175).

In many respects, the similarity to the emerging and espoused role of EAs is striking. However, the absence of the 'profit' motive and nature of educational need may alter the model slightly, especially in the 'educational leadership' and 'professional' functions of schools and EAs.

The proposed outcomes of 'divisionalisation' appear relevant to Scottish education. Firstly, "divisionalisation only entails a devolution of day- to- day management from senior head office managers to divisional heads... There is no necessary devolution of management functions within individual divisions" (*ibid*:175). Hence, although some

evidence of 'decentralisation' within schools exists, this is generally under- developed and limited. Head teachers retain ultimate authority. Secondly and importantly:

there is a constant tendency for the relationship between head office and the divisions to become more bureaucratic, with more formal controls, more direct interference in divisional operations and centralisation of previously devolved functions, since senior head office managers are reluctant to give market logic a free reign. (*Ibid*).

Such a process had emerged in the Regions. While some of the new EAs were advocating increased decentralisation, there was a desire to create 'coherence' also and budgetary constraints, creating centralising tendencies. As Hales (1993:186) concludes: "Rather than decentralise or die, bureaucracies find a multitude of ways to effect a stay of execution."

The education system is developing in complex and often unanticipated ways. Despite the promotion of market mechanisms, these have been only partially implemented, frequently resisted and re- interpreted. Nevertheless, change has occurred and education is not the same traditional bureaucracy and hierarchy. Schools have gained powers and flexibility, EAs have become leaner and reformed roles are emerging. Walsh (1995:xvii) argues that there has been a move from 'hierarchies' to 'hierarchies with markets'. Mitchell (1993:6) explains that the relationships between hierarchies "may have changed significantly", and within hierarchies the "structure and operation" may have altered, e.g. becoming "'flatter' or 'looser'". Such processes are evident in education. Consequently, there is the possibility that the education system is neither a pure market nor hierarchy.

Network

'Networks' are argued to conceptualise what "cannot be defined as either quintessentially market based on the one hand or as reducible to hierarchically based on the other" (Thompson 1993:51). In light of 'quasi- market' reforms such as LMS, networks are argued to be emerging and characterise the education and local government systems (Alexander 1988, Bridges & Husbands 1996, Glegg 1995, Husbands 1996, Levacic 1995, Macbeth *et al* 1995, McCreath & Maclachlan 1995,

Ranson & Tomlinson 1994, Upton 1996, Walsh 1995, Warwick 1995). The emergence of networks, assuming interdependence, co-operation and trust between individuals, contradicts the market assumptions of “individualised, selfish, non-trusting and non-co-operative behaviour” (Thompson 1993:63). Networks are different also from hierarchy given the level of trust and the ‘looser’, fluid structures potential. If network is that which is neither pure hierarchy nor market, it has appeal for conceptualisation of the education system. However, as an explanatory device, ‘network’ is loose and vague requiring clarification.

In a sense, the ‘partnership’ model was a ‘network’, however its predominantly hierarchical and relatively closed nature is believed to differ from recent changes:

power relationships that exist... are side-ways relationships as well as upward and downward movements. And I think that’s a significant change... So where it used to be Central Government, Local Government, School, in a very hierarchical way, I think we’re now into much more widespread relationships, in the sense of bringing in parents, and school boards, and employers, and a whole range of other players. (SRCEO4).

The education system always has been a ‘network’, however this is becoming increasingly important and formalised due to policies involving parents and the business community for example, as well as altering relationships between ‘educational partners’.

In my research, the notion of ‘networks’ was more popular than ‘markets’, as the former was perceived as generating positive ‘co-operation’ while the latter equalled negative ‘competition’. Officers in particular were keen to stress the collective and co-operative nature of education. Promotion of ‘co-operation’ has become formalised in policies that “pushed” and “encouraged” this. Consequently, the emergence of co-operation was not a spontaneous or necessarily inherent tendency. The Strathclyde ‘cluster’ arrangement was the most successful in creating ‘co-operation’, however this was a defined range of schools for defined purposes. A South Lanarkshire officer implied this dual strategy of encouraging yet delimiting co-operation:

we would be wanting to promote co-operation and, not necessarily between clusters because that's not really how it works, but co-operation between individual clusters and ourselves is very much top of the list.

Nevertheless, officers were aware that in practice "schools have got their own agenda but they're not always too interested in what other schools are doing" (NLEO1) and that the existence of co-operation was "limited".

Although many head teachers agreed with the principle of 'co-operation', they did not necessarily view it as a priority nor practicable. A head teacher explained that co-operation existed because the Region required it:

it's a function of the Region to organise these. And the fact that they're organised you go to them. If there's nobody there to organise them, then the thing will just fade away by default I suspect.

This implies not so much spontaneous networks as hierarchically defined policies. Nevertheless, in some areas, schools had choice and their attitude to co-operation was calculative: "it's a double-edged sword in that we are able to opt in or opt out". The 'network' features of 'altruism' and 'co-operative outlook' are limited (Thompson 1993).

In Aberdeenshire EA, "the in- word" (APS1) was 'networks' due to the Director's proposed 'Local Education Networks', consisting of "co-operatives of schools", plus pre-schools and community education, which may receive additional staffing and resourcing, plus a "quality assurance" mechanism. In a time of budget constraint and promotion of market forces, co-operatives were perceived to ameliorate the situation:

You look at the amount of money that you have tied up in clerical and admin support in the community centre, in a primary, in a nursery, in a secondary school, they're basically all doing similar functions. If you pulled the resource into the network, you might be able to improve that... we've also addressed the issue of workload and stress, because by co-operating we can reduce all the demands on them at the same time. And it stops parents playing off school against school or shopping around or going into a kind of league table mentality...They all have to produce a school brochure. We would produce

that centrally and just print it out for them... And stop them all re-inventing the wheel. (AEO1).

Developing a co-operative and collective model was proposed to overcome competitive and individualistic problems and tendencies. However, the proposed model, while more 'local' than central EA, was still a centralisation of power, responsibilities and resources.

While head teachers were supportive of 'co-operation' in principle, there were concerns about the process, policy and practicality. The policy was perceived as "simplistic", driven by the Director, contradicting DSM and impractical:

it just isn't going to work. They're putting major finance into them. It's going to come out of the devolved budgets. They've got to take it away from us to put it in the pot. Which just flies in the face of DEM... To be going for some wholesale reshuffling of the way the service is delivered, I think is just a mistake. And reluctantly something has got to go... well the principle is fine. That you can share stuff is a good enough principle. But it's just not going to work. I mean you don't even get that with teachers in classes next door, far less whole schools in this area agreeing on anything. At the end of the day, you run your school. That's what you are paid for. But (DoE), he's generating ... all of that, that's his baby.

Primary heads were particularly concerned as they had not been properly consulted on the issue, contradicting the notion of 'co-operation'. Head teachers would return to a position of 'managing' only a very limited budget, e.g. per capita, within their school. While 'co-operation' may create economies of scale and a collective ethos, it has been centrally imposed and undermines DSM.

The limited evidence of 'co-operation' and community-level participation indicates Local Education Networks may be problematic. Raab *et al* (1997:149) discovered:

The traditional policy network that linked central government, local authorities and teachers' organisations may have become fragile, but the extent to which new networks are being developed appears limited.

Participation has not evolved as anticipated. In Scotland, there appears a consensus that decisions should be trusted to 'education professionals'. In schools, evidence suggests a relative lack of co-operation, which is sometimes perceived as inappropriate: "I don't think this tootling about... is much of a blessing to anybody at all" (HRCPS3). Head teachers liked co-operation if it was advantageous to them. Arguably, this indicates schools' "self interest", more akin to a market than a 'network' (Taylor *et al* 1997:92):

In the kind of folksy school cartels envisaged as alternatives to the LEA, individual survival, envy and egoism are as likely to dominate as altruism and collaboration. (Heller with Edwards 1992:152- 153)

Nevertheless, in Scotland, market principles and values are rejected as schools and EAs have a sense of community and collective involvement. The network attribute of 'solidarity' "attributed to the sharing of common experience" (Thompson 1993:54) appears strong, drawing on historical practices and cultural traditions. The other network attributes of 'altruism', 'loyalty', 'reciprocity' and 'trust' appear potential and are inherent in notions of 'Scottishness' and 'Partnership'. However, what is debatable is the extent and profundity with which these are 'actively and positively' affirmed and enacted in everyday practices. All of the above attributes are equally features of a professional public service ethic, which may be manifest in hierarchical arrangements. The concept and existence of networks requires greater clarity and distinction. Schools and EA are involved in a network of relationships with various bodies, e.g. parents, private sector, community organisations, churches. However, in their relationships with each other there remains a strong hierarchical character, e.g. in the ability of the EA to impose 'local networks', although this is altering in light of 'market' reforms also.

Markets, Hierarchies and Networks

Individually the concepts of 'market', 'hierarchy' and 'network' are not fully adequate conceptualisations of the emerging education system, plus the concepts themselves require greater consideration and clarification. However, combining all three models in analysis may offer merits (Cochrane 1993, Levacic 1992, 1995):

If each of the three models has its problems... bringing them together is quite a helpful way... if only because no model of social life can ever incorporate its full complexity... it is possible to use the models so that their individual weaknesses are compensated for by their collective strengths, as each is used to question the other and draw our attention to different aspects of change. (Cochrane 1993:223).

This use of the models is beneficial in seeking to explore the complex and sometimes apparently contradictory trend to both centralisation and decentralisation occurring in the education and local government systems (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Busher & Saran 1993, McDowall 1994, McPherson 1989, Munn 1992, Walsh 1995).

Since the origins of the state education system, it has been characterised by hierarchy. Central government, local government and schools are legally placed in a line of power and control. Following the logic of a Scottish consensus for centralisation and professional authority, an inherent hierarchical tendency has been pervasive and remains. The 'partnership' that existed involved a hierarchical character. However, complete authority and acceptance cannot be assured, nor can the bureaucratic assumption of predictability. The potential for resistance, re-interpretation and influence are potent. Cochrane's (1993:220) argument can be applied to relations between school and EA also:

If the relationship between central and local government is a hierarchical one, it is certainly far more complex than any simple model of hierarchy would suggest. It looks rather more like a constant process of negotiation in which the negotiators are not always clear of ground rules- and the centre always has the possibility of changing them, but can rarely predict the consequences of such changes with any accuracy.

While the EA does have some control over schools, this is not complete and has been challenged by notions of 'professional' and 'managerial' power in schools. This lack of predictability has been compounded by central government's attempts to impose 'quasi-market' reforms, which have altered and arguably de-stabilised the traditional system.

Although the 'education market' has been resisted and mediated, it is not without influence. The notion of the EA as operating akin to an 'internal market' (Levacic 1992,1995) has some relevance given the existence of the school's capacity to choose suppliers via DSM, the extension of CCT and the potential of parental choice. However, schools remain very supportive and reliant on the EA, particularly for strategic and educational support, which extends to service provision. Head teachers tend to perceive themselves as subordinate to the EA and most enjoy the seniority, support and 'framework' of the EA. In the evolving relationship between school and EA, there is the "mixing...(of) market and hierarchical models of co-ordination" (Cochrane 1993:225) and the emergence of "a new form of organisation that is neither market nor hierarchy, but lies... between the two" (Walsh 1995:xviii). Certain aspects of the EA/ school relationship may remain hierarchical in the long- term, e.g. 'banker' and 'monitor' roles, but other functions, such as service provision, may become increasingly market- based, due to contractual relations and service agreements. Conceptually, and at the ground- level, this 'mixture' may create "increased confusion" (Cochrane 1993:225) and there is a need for greater conceptual development and empirical exploration.

The solution is not simply that 'networks' will replace 'markets' or 'hierarchy', although networks may have some influence. In Scotland, the most developed 'network' is the 'policy network' influencing education policy and its perception (Paterson 1997, Raab *et al* 1997). The notion of a 'policy community' is cherished by the 'Scottish myth' and remains inherent in 'Partnership' also (McPherson & Raab 1988). The existence and influence of 'policy networks' in education and local government have been widely documented (Cochrane 1993, Levacic 1993b, Rhodes 1988,1991) and hold relevance in contemporary Scotland (McPherson & Raab 1988, Paterson 1997, Raab *et al* 1997). An overarching consensus about the collective, public, professional, distinctively Scottish and inherently educational nature of the education system pervaded my interviewees' perceptions, assumptions and explanations. There was the capacity to influence and mediate policy, but an overarching consensus about the direction of policy and general acceptance of a centralisation of 'strategy' and direction, although some limited decentralisation of

power was welcomed also - 'freedom within a framework'. This 'framework' consisted of the actions of the 'policy community' and facilitated in practice many features of hierarchical structures, procedures and controls. Schools were generally supportive of their EA who they perceived as 'buffering' them from the Scottish Office, which in itself especially amongst officers, was perceived as more sensitive and supportive than the 'English' central government. Policies like DSM and GMS provided the opportunity for market relationships to emerge, however these were heavily mediated and appropriated to the 'ethics' of education. Therefore, within the overarching 'framework' of the 'policy network', there remain hierarchical structures and controls, alongside limited market- type developments in the relationship between school and EA.

Potentially, the models of 'market', 'hierarchy' and 'network', do offer scope for an understanding of the education and local government systems. However, their accordance with reality must be 'tested' and critiqued. Furthermore, they offer little insight into the actual complexities and outcomes of change. Both DSM and Reorganisation are tremendous changes in the structure and operation of the education system. However, there remains continuity also, e.g. in the adhering perceptions of 'Scottishness', 'partnership', hierarchical tendencies and mediation of reform. In education, change appears to be incremental, evolutionary and often reactive, rather than truly revolutionary. Yet within a specific moment in time, there may be greater variety and diversity than a uniform model can account for. The existence of both greater consistency over time yet diversity within time is not adequately explained by the concepts of market, hierarchy and network. Furthermore, the concepts tell us little of the process of change and politics of policy. Cochrane (1993:223) comments:

Despite their combined strength, however, all of the models have a shared weakness which is apparent in their analysis of central- local relations. None of them is very convincing in placing those relations in their wider social and economic context.

While useful exploratory devices, the concepts require development and consideration alongside issues of historical legacy, cultural assumptions, the nature of change and

the perception and values associated with policy and practice. Fundamentally, issues of 'structure' and 'agency' must be considered to benefit explanation.

Structure and Agency

My research is influenced by 'policy sociology' (Ozga 1987, Raab 1994a). This is a general approach which includes an attempt to consider issues of structure and agency and to close the 'micro- macro' gap through 'middle level' analyses (*ibid*). This is a fruitful but inherently difficult proposition. My research has operated mainly at the 'micro' and 'meso' levels, but has been informed by 'macro' issues also. Given the empirical nature of my research, it would be "an exhaustible task" to attempt to "map" all the factor and "range of causal chains" between the micro, meso and macro levels (Hammersley 1984:321- 322). Nevertheless, it is apparent that the use of Structuration theory as a 'sensitising device' and the philosophical and methodological propositions of critical realism offer scope for exploring and interpreting the nature of education policy, its process and implications. Furthermore, focussing on 'structure' and 'agency' as discursively articulated and perceived by interviewees is important.

Structural changes have occurred and continue, affecting the public sector. Post-modernist concerns and demographic shifts have affected upon society affecting the nature and purposes of the public sector (Baldrick 1993, Fox & Miller 1995, Ranson & Stewart 1994). Post- Fordism, 'informatization' and technological development has influenced organisational structures and procedures (Hood 1991b,1994, Ranson & Stewart 1994, Walsh 1995). Arguably most fundamentally, economic shifts and restructuring have affected the policy and practice of the public sector (Hughes 1994, OECD 1992, Walsh 1995). In Britain during the 1970s, the economic crisis created a perception of 'fiscal crisis' in which education and local government systems were attributed with blame (Chitty 1992, Coulby 1989, Gray *et al* 1983, McPherson & Raab 1988, Ranson & Stewart 1994, Simon 1992, Walsh 1995). A political shift to the Right, the emergence of economic issues as "meta- policy" (Taylor *et al* 1997:58) and a 'mega- trend' to 'decentralisation' (Caldwell & Spinks 1992) impacted on the education system.

These structural forces required some form of policy response. The evolving policies have been documented and critiqued throughout this thesis, especially DSM and Reorganisation. However, structural forces do not manifest uniform policies which are directly implemented in practice. Instead, policies are a political process:

change cannot be produced by government edict alone... although government legislation, policies and programmes are important, they can be interpreted in a variety of ways. Not only do they articulate with a range of cultural, social, economic and political considerations but also with the specificities of local circumstances- of local agendas and the interest of individuals and groups. (Taylor *et al* 1997:174).

Structures may require, influence and constrain change and policies, but there remains scope for some agency level re- interpretation. Hence there is “the *adaptation* of centrally imposed policies rather than their straight- forward implementation” (*ibid*:32). A range of structural factors serve to create the ‘context’ within which policy must be created and operate. However, Seddon (1994) has argued that ‘policy contexts’ are not impervious and can be ‘constructed’ to accord with desired objectives. Within ‘policy contexts’ there is some scope for agency- level ‘negotiation’, e.g. in the capacity for local authorities to re- interpret decentralisation initiatives (Leach 1996b). Furthermore, the perception and interpretation of the ‘structural’ context is discursively articulated and expressed at the agency- level. Following a realist philosophy, if unobservable but real structures create observable consequences, one manifestation of this will be within discourse.

An over- arching discourse of ‘efficiency’ has been promoted during the last twenty years. Officers were aware of this ‘context’ and ‘ethos’ of ‘markets and managerialism’. They demonstrated capacity and willingness to mediate and re- interpret such a ‘structure’ as far as possible. The evidence did not indicate structural determinism, but neither did it suggest agency ‘Intentionalism’ (Hay 1995). In Strathclyde’s promotion of DMR, there appears an agency- led initiative. However, the ‘context’ of practical, political and structural changes required action: “No change was not an option” (INLOGOV 1989:6). Nevertheless, in the attempt to ameliorate the ‘market philosophy’ to generate ‘non- market public sector’ reform taking account

of the 'Scottish dimension', there was the attempt for agency- level interpretation and mediation of change. Similarly, in Grampian there was the attempt to counter and re-interpret the culture of 'markets and management' with a reformed vision of 'partnership'. McPherson (1989:94) argued the 'survival' of EAs depended on their "negotiation of purposes, downwards with individual schools and upwards with central government". This appears to be occurring both pre- and post- Reorganisation. The scope for local variety and agency- level influence gives credence to the notion that policy is a process (Lee 1990, Levacic 1995, Taylor *et al* 1997). Furthermore, it is apparent that not only are practices important but also perceptions. Fundamentally, the use of discourse enables both structural change and agency- level resistance and re- interpretation. For example, in the promotion of the 'efficiency' discourse based on economic criteria, but its mediation and resistance due to the contrary 'Scottishness' and 'Partnership' discourses.

Nevertheless, this is not to argue that agency- level action is easy. At the individual level, there are individual differences:

The problem with it is it doesn't happen straightforwardly. When you have different personalities, with different experiences, different style. They handle this thing differently. (COAEO2).

Agents have different "structural location(s)" (Taylor *et al* 1997:169), which influence their action and that of others. In SRC, the EA could not act autonomously of consideration of the other educational 'partners', as an officer explained:

it wasn't a pure model that we were developing. It was constrained by the fact that we wanted to maintain good relationships publicly with all of our potential clients.

Hence, the need to 'manage change' and to understand the 'context' within which action is possible, affected by the perceptions and practices of others, historical legacy, cultural traditions and institutionalised assumptions.

Fundamentally and pervasively, economic factors constrained agency- level action and reaction. The promotion of economic discourse and economically- derived policy assumptions were being imposed upon the education service. Although many aspects

of this process were being resisted and mediated, through particularly notions of 'Scottishness' linked to educational need and collectivism, enforced also by 'Partnership' and assumptions of educational 'distinctiveness' and professionalism, the 'economic' approaches were not without influence. Managerial approaches and policies were being implanted. Language of 'management, 'value for money', 'enabling', 'effectiveness' and occasionally 'efficiency' were gaining currency, although they were linked to 'educational' appropriateness in an attempt to 'domesticate' such terminology (McLaughlin 1994). In practice, economic considerations were becoming utmost and constraining action due to the 'fiscal crisis' especially post- Reorganisation:

One thing that is kind of shaping everybody's thinking really is the budget.

And the fact that the budgets are so tight and so constrained. (SLEO1).

Officers spoke of actions being 'driven' and 'shaped' by the budget, such as consideration of what the core services of the EA would be, how should these be delivered and the slimming of management structures. This impacted on schools where the capacity for 'managerial' decision- making was severely constrained by budgetary issues. Despite a reluctance amongst my interviewees to let economic imperatives overtake educational ones, this movement was evolving and had a sense of inevitability.

There is a certain 'duality of structure' involving both structure and action (Giddens 1981). However, at this stage in historical, cultural, political and economic development, Bhasker's (1989) proposition that structure pre- exists agency but subsequently can only be reproduced through agency is most plausible. Hay's (1995) discussion of research issues derived from critical realism has relevance to my findings. He argues:

all human agency occurs and acquires meaning only in relation to already pre-constituted, and deeply structured, settings... (which) simultaneously constrain and enable the actors. (*ibid*:200- 201).

Scottish education officers and head teachers have a perception of themselves, education policies and subsequent practices which relate to historical traditions, cultural assumptions, civil society, political influences, the policy community and

institutionalised practices. Importantly, the discourses of 'Scottishness' and 'Partnership' provide a sense of identity, a set of values and assumptions and a guidance to action. These are being challenged by the discourse of 'efficiency' to which agents are reacting in various ways. Hence, as Hay (*ibid*) explains the "constraints" imposed "on action by structured settings" are both "physical", e.g. the level of budget, plus "social", the assumed appropriate action and related consequences. Although structure constrains action it does "not determine outcomes *directly*" but it does "define the potential range of options and strategies" (*ibid*). Strathclyde's attempt to devise a different model of devolution was constrained by the need to re-interpret and sensitise the 'market philosophy' and accord with notions of 'Scottishness' and 'Partnership'. A truly radical and innovative model was not created. Therefore, it is apparent that structure both constrains and enables action as expressed in pervading discourse. Further research is required to explore how a 'hierarchy of discourse' emerges, the nature of the 'meta - discourse' and how this affects the nature of structure and capacity for agency.

There are various 'action settings', e.g. the differing perceptions and practices of EAs and schools. Hay (*ibid*) explains:

Action settings can be conceived of in terms of a nested hierarchy of levels of structure that interact in complex ways to condition and set the context within which agency is displayed.

This has congruence with the ongoing existence of 'hierarchy' in the education system and the perception that the 'action' of EAs in many ways serve to 'structure', 'enable' and 'constrain' the action at school- level (although there is a two - way process potential). In conclusion and pertinent to an understanding of the education system:

Strategic action is the dialectical interplay of intentional and knowledgeable, yet structurally- embedded actors and the pre-constituted (structured) contexts they inhabit. Actions occur within structured settings, yet actors have the potential (at least partially) to transform those structures through their actions. This impact of agents upon structures may be either deliberate or unintended. (*Ibid*).

The question requiring further research is the extent to which agents can transform structures and whether certain agents are placed in a better “structural location” (Taylor *et al* 1997:169) to do so. The higher in the ‘structural’ hierarchy an agent is located the greater capacity to influence that structure they appear to hold, hence although officers and teachers can mediate, influence and re-interpret ‘structural’ forces this tends not to challenge the very existence of that structure. However, the issue is not simply the ‘capability’, ‘knowledgability’ and consequent actions of agents (Giddens 1981), but also their use of and identification with dominant discourses. The study of discourse links issues of structure and agency in an exploration of the power, politics and processes of policy.

There is an issue as to how the ‘duality of structure’ operates over ‘time and space’ (Giddens 1981). Within the relatively short time frame of my research, changes were occurring and evolving, e.g. due to budgetary constraint, Reorganisation and the actions of politicians and officers. Across my research sites, there were variations also in practice. Nevertheless, there was an over-arching similarity in the direction of reform although some differences in attempts to react to and re-interpret that reform, e.g. the ‘enabling’ East Renfrewshire, the ‘network’ and ‘family’ of Aberdeenshire and the ‘direct service provider’ of South Lanarkshire. The influence of market models and attempt to ‘domesticate’ them were common-place. The research indicates both capacity for detailed variety but also a broad similarity of experience.

Furthermore, research indicates that this trend may be broader than Scotland:

Important variations between England and Scotland were identified across education authorities and among schools within the same local authority. On the other hand, the similarities among the schools in the study were striking, given the differences in legislation and local contexts. (Raab *et al* 1997:155).

My research has focussed on Scotland with some consideration of the British context also. The introduction of decentralisation and economic imperatives to education is becoming an increasingly global process (Bullock & Thomas 1997, Caldwell & Spinks 1992, Taylor *et al* 1997). This ‘context’ influenced Scottish perceptions. One head teacher commented that there was nothing “sinister about” DSM as it was part of

an international trend. While an officer commented “people had almost got it in their subconsciousness that this is going to happen in due course”. Nevertheless, the same officer stated: “you’ve always got to be aware of the different cultural context. You should never forget that the Scottish education system is different.”. This combination of national difference, agency level interpretations and global structural change requires research. Perception of ‘difference’ may create different practices or mask similarities.

A discussion of the process and implications of globalisation is out-with the scope of this thesis. It is apparent that some form of globalisation of the economy in particular is occurring, but may affect also politics and culture (Taylor *et al* 1997). The implications of this trend for nation- states and the economic, political, civil and educational life within are not fully known. Nevertheless, the assumption of ‘homogenisation’ may be mis-placed. The twin processes of decentralisation and centralisation are potent. Taylor *et al* (1997) discuss the emergence of a global system, alongside the rise of local ‘ethnic’ units, both of which place strain on the nation- state. They cite Scotland as evidence of “ethnic tribalism” with the drives to political autonomy and cultural difference as distinguishing features (*ibid*:59). It is possible that the existence of a ‘Scottish dimension’ within British education suggests the capacity for local variation and agency action to exist within a broad and increasing structural framework. The impact of nation- states on educational reform, the international nature of reform and indeed the internationalisation of reform are issues which require exploration.

A Combination and Dynamic of Discourses of Scottishness, Partnership and Efficiency

All of the above indicates that the discourse prevalent in the education system is important and influential, it is both “expressive and explanatory” for the agents affected (McPherson & Raab 1988:407). Historically, the discourses of ‘Scottish myth’, ‘Partnership’ and ‘Efficiency’ have evolved and influenced upon the perception and practice of the education system. While these discourses have distinctive elements, they are not mutually exclusive in contemporary debates and

policies. Furthermore, the content of the discourses have a variety of dimensions and a dynamic quality facilitating their selective interpretation and application to justify particular perceptions and practices. Dominant discourses can “shape the consciousness of the actors” (Gray *et al* 1983:309), yet actors have some capacity to purposefully use discourse also.

The most fundamental discourse within my research findings has been a perception of ‘Scottishness’. From the origins of the system, Scottish education has been presented as democratic, egalitarian and broad-based (Gethins *et al* 1979, Scottish Centre for Economic and Social Research 1989). This ‘myth’ endures today. Gray *et al* (1983: 313) argue: “myth is mapped on to the past so as to make it a continuous present”. However, this ignores the dynamic quality of the ‘Scottish myth’ (Humes 1983, Paterson 1983) which alters to accommodate conflicting ideas and changing practices (McPherson & Raab 1988, Munn 1997a). In principle, Scottish education supports collective, public provision for a ‘social’ conception of education (McPherson & Raab 1988, Scottish Centre for Economic and Social Research 1984). Education was to be “a national, public, system” and the English preference for minimal provision and market forces were rejected (McPherson & Raab 1988:36- 37). However, the ‘Scottish myth’ combines a strong principle of ‘individualism’ with ‘collectivism’ arguing for collective provision but individual advancement through the promotion of meritocracy. Therefore, in principle and moving into practice, there is conflict between the two perspectives:

the one stressing open access, community and local control, the other stressing restricted access, individualism and central control. (*Ibid*: 33).

With the extension of state education from the late 19th Century onwards, it was the latter approach which dominated. Hence, it was only elementary education that was widely available. Schooling was bipartite with selection and streaming prevalent. This approach involved a belief in the social order and economic appropriateness. Therefore, the wide access, ongoing education, equality of opportunity, collective and co-operative ‘Scottish myth’ which interviewees espoused and promoted had some longevity in principle but did not characterise the ‘Scottish practice’ throughout the education system traditionally.

Rather the founding beliefs of my interviewees relating to equality, equity, need, collectivism, comprehensive education and local government involvement relate to developments in the post-war period and the 'British myth' of 'Partnership' (Fenwick 1985, McPherson & Raab 1988). However, my interviewees were not promoting a 'British' perception but a distinctively 'Scottish' one in principle. There is the ongoing attempt to 'negotiate' the 'autonomy' of the Scottish education system (Paterson 1997). It could be argued that the 'principles' of the post-war consensus, equality of opportunity, broad education, collective provision, were more Scottish than the previous English assumptions of minimal elementary provision through market forces (McPherson & Raab 1988). Nevertheless, many of the practices of 'partnership' were new to Scotland. Local government did not gain responsibility for Scottish education until 1929. However, the democratic and service principles of local government education (Hill 1974, Sharpe 1970, Smith 1985) were valued and defended by my interviewees. Similarly, the comprehensive principle of collective and equitable education is recent. McPherson & Raab (1988:394) depict comprehensive reorganisation as "a British policy... with little Scottish impetus before the early 1960s". As recently as 1968, legislation was required to abolish selective schools in Scotland charging fees (Munn 1997b). Yet it was rejection of selection, competition and 'market' forces that was integral to my interviewees' discourse of 'Scottishness'. It is plausible there is "a tradition constructed through the selective reinterpretation of the past" (McPherson & Raab 1988: 499).

Elements of the 'partnership' discourse which accord with elements of the 'Scottish' discourse have been adopted to reinforce the latter. However, while some notion of 'partnership' remains, it is shifting from the traditional conception of "central authority and local agent" (McPherson & Raab 1988:4) between central and local governments (Regan 1977). Officers and head teachers perceived the partnership to be operating at their level, seeking to defend a linkage between EA and school but realising that its nature was changing. Notions of 'partnership' had some popularity but the concept required reform to accommodate changing policies and practices, particularly the 'empowerment' of schools. The Government's attempt to construct a

direct 'partnership' between school and central government was not popular at the local level. Head teachers who would consider opting out would do so due to the economic and managerial gains within the school, but did not desire the direct 'partnership' with central government per se. Rather most head teachers perceived a key role for the EA as being the 'buffer' between school and central government, acting as a 'partner' with and advocate of the former to the latter. The Government's policy of involving parents was slightly more 'popular' but not especially so. In practice, there was little evidence of extensive participatory 'partnerships' involving parents emerging (Raab *et al* 1997, Watt 1997):

The belief that a school can provide a total education is deeply engrained in Scottish thinking. (Macbeth 1994:7).

A 'Scottish' perception that education should be the province of professionals promotes a 'partnership' which mediates against political and lay interference.

The discourse of 'Scottishness' and 'Partnership' and their embodiment in policy have come under 'attack', especially post- 1979. Since this time, a discourse of 'efficiency' has been constructed around notions of economic 'necessity' and political ideals. Paterson (1997:147) argues that "serious conflict in education" was avoided until: "The crucial change came about when the third Thatcher government turned its attention firmly to social policy". This was to be a 'British project' which emphasised 'market forces'. Consequently, this:

provoked deep hostility because it is believed to threaten the integrity and autonomy of Scottish education... It was also accused of undermining the autonomy of local government. (*Ibid*).

The fundamental principles of Scottishness, collective, public and democratic education were at stake. Hence, the promotion of these principles by my interviewees was not simply to promote Scottish education as 'superior' to and distinct from English education, but also to reject the politicisation of education and the dominance of economic models over educational need attempted by the perceived increasingly 'English' Conservative Government.

The 'efficiency' discourse was problematic for my interviewees. Notions of markets, competition, individualism and abstract economic criteria were resisted. Interviewees sought to 'amend' these principles to take account of the 'Scottish' and 'educational' dimensions or rejected their applicability. Hence, the purposeful use of a 'selective reinterpretation' of 'Scottishness' and 'partnership' to avoid Scottish education being subsumed by processes of Anglicisation and market economics. Different denotations of 'efficiency' were more acceptable in education. From the outset, the need to combine an appropriate vision of social and economic efficiency with educational provision was intrinsic (McPherson & Raab 1988) and persisted during the post-war years (Kogan 1985, Woolridge 1990). In the contemporary period of fiscal restraint and changing practices, my interviewees recognised the need to create managerial 'efficiencies' within education and secure 'value for money'. However, rather than being an abstract and generic exercise, they perceived that this should be linked to the promotion of 'effective education' and 'educational need' resulting in the improvement not the undermining of the education system and process. A notion of 'efficiency' per se was not necessarily the problem, it was the nature of the constructed discourse of 'efficiency' based upon right-wing political ideals, abstract economic principles and generic arguments which took no account of the historical traditions, cultural assumptions, institutionalised practices and perceptions of 'educationalists' which was abhorrent. Hence, the counter-argument was constructed around a reinterpretation of the historical, cultural and institutionalised discourses of 'Scottishness' and to a lesser extent 'partnership', promoting a democratic, distinctive, collective and *educational system*.

While all three discourses are evident in contemporary perceptions, practices and policies, it is the 'Scottish' discourse which is most strongly supported and cherished by my interviewees. Although it does not serve as a 'blue-print' for action and indeed its practical application has shifted dramatically over the years, values of democratic, egalitarian and collective education serve as fundamental guiding principles. It is this persistent perception of 'Scottish distinctiveness' which is both most powerful and curious given the trends towards Anglicisation since the 1970s (Grant 1982, Roberston 1984, Paterson 1997), internationalisation and globalisation of economic

activity and 'mega- trend' to decentralisation (Caldwell & Spinks 1992, Paterson 1997, Taylor *et al* 1997).

Fundamentally, Scotland is not a separate nation- state but rather part of Britain and the United Kingdom. Nevertheless, my research and that of others (Arnott 1993, Arnott *et al* 1993a, Arnott & Munn 1994, Clark & Munn 1997, Gethins *et al* 1979, Gray *et al* 1983, Humes & MacKenzie 1994, Humes & Paterson 1983, McPherson & Raab 1988, Raab *et al* 1997) has suggested:

the idea that the United Kingdom was a unitary state with one policy process becomes untenable. (Paterson 1997: 141).

Paterson (1997:140) argues that the "explanation by origin", Scotland's historical autonomy manifests future autonomy, is popular but partial. Rather he posits the need also for exploration of the ongoing process of 'negotiated autonomy'. This links historical origins, evolving practices and contemporary perceptions. Negotiated autonomy consists of two components. Firstly, "rational pragmatism" (Paterson 1997:140). 'Reason' rather than 'sentiment' guide the Scots' psyche and practice. Hence, if being within the United Kingdom, 'works' for Scotland, e.g. advantageous government funding maintains the education function, why challenge the system. Therefore, "partial autonomy" may be preferable to independence (*ibid*). Nevertheless, Scotland is not subsumed by Britain due to:

the second element of negotiated autonomy, a version of nationalism. This has been the social force that has set the whole process going and has maintained its existence. (*Ibid*).

Generally, it is 'banal nationalism' (Billig 1995) operating at the level of fundamental principle and cultural tradition, rather than an overt proclamation of nationality. Paterson (1997:141) explains this "permeates the networks of Scottish government. It permeates, moreover, implicitly" . Consequently, the culture, civil and political orientation results in Scotland being "a semi- independent part of another state" (*ibid*).

The above impacts on the education system, its policies and processes. The notion of a 'policy community' and associated 'networks' has "political rationality", e.g. it aids

the creation of education policy, but operates also due to “an assumption of a fairly homogenous Scottishness, and a view of Scottish education as having certain distinguishing features” (*ibid*: 143) drawing on the ‘Scottish myth’. This notion of “mutual interest” throughout Scottish education and a ‘homogenous’ culture (*ibid*: 144- 145) manifests an ‘official nationalism’ (Kellas 1991) whereby Scotland assumes a distinctive and relatively uniform identity. This facilitates the orientation of Scottish education policy and eases its implementation due to the shared assumptions throughout the system. Consequently, the combination of ‘rational pragmatism’ and ‘nationalism’ affects those at the local level also. Paterson (1997:145-146) suggests:

Most of the daily policy discussion in which Scottish teachers and others engage has been similar to the discussion that could be observed in other similar educational systems... But, at the same time, the educational professionals have taken for granted a Scottish frame- work... and they have shared with the policy communities the inherited myths about the distinctive character of the system, and therefore have voluntarily participated in disseminating a homogenous image of Scottish national identity.

This process has characterised the historical development of education policy and remains in contemporary practices, therefore mediating the influence of wider educational, social and political changes.

However, the nature of ‘negotiated autonomy’ can be ‘renegotiated’ and contemporary practices have demonstrated “an intensification of the pervasive nationalism” (*ibid*: 146). This is due largely to the Conservative Governments post-1979 being perceived as ‘English’ and “hostile to Scottish distinctiveness” (*ibid*). Hence, the shift from ‘Scottishness’ being ‘taken- for- granted’ to its assertion and centrality in my interviewees’ rejection of ‘English’ policies and ‘market models’. Paterson’s comments on the policy and perception of TVEI have relevance to my understanding of DSM. He argues: “on the one hand, the debate was mostly about pragmatism, not overtly nationalism” (*ibid*: 148), e.g. DSM being developed as managerially appropriate and requiring practical and organisational improvement. However in ‘avoiding the pitfalls of LMS’ the argument was not simply pragmatic: “as always, the Scottishness can be found in the context” (*ibid*). Therefore, as with

TVEI, DSM came to differ significantly from English LMS, although the fundamental principle of devolving school management was not rejected: "This was a negotiation and not a rebellion" (*ibid*).

In the interviewees' comments, there is the mix of 'pragmatic rationalism' and 'nationalism' as evident and embodied in the discourses of Scottishness, Partnership, and Efficiency. DSM is accepted because it is distinctively Scottish, but also because it assumes 'good management' and a more 'efficient' education system, provided the 'partnership' of EA and school is retained. By contrast, GMS is resisted or substantially mediated in terms of the three discourses. Schools will not opt out because it is anti-Scottish to do so and they enjoy the 'partnership' with the EA, however if this broke down to such an extreme extent, that it would make pragmatic sense for schools to opt out, they may be 'forced' to do so. The three discourses can be combined to undermine or re-enforce aspects of perception and practice. However, there are conflicts between the three discourses and attempts to combine them are controversial. Furthermore, within each discourse, there are potential contradictions and the capacity to select and re-interpret elements for particular purposes and practices. Fundamentally, the discourses are dynamic and not completely 'closed', although they do favour certain sets of principles and related practices. As Paterson (1997) has explored, 'Scottishness' is the fundamental principle and discourse, this mediates other principles and subsequent policies, perceptions and practices. Therefore, it is plausible that there are core implicit values and assumptions which affect an individual's personal and collective identity and role, e.g. the value of education for teachers. Individuals do not necessarily continually select choices between discursive strategies as they routinely act, however the discourses supported, modified or rejected indicate the nature of the core values and assumptions.

From Discourse to Practical Development

It is important to recognise that the education system and policies of DSM and Reorganisation require detailed practical development, not simply discursive strategies. While discourses are both pervasive and profound, they operate often to

establish beliefs, values and meanings, to promote assumptions which are subconsciously adhered to and offer tacit understanding. While Scottish educationalists operate within an assumption and discourse of 'Scottishness' which establishes a broad framework for action, in daily practices, pragmatic issues will take precedence in guiding specific actions within this framework of 'acceptable' practice. Therefore, there remains a need for ongoing practical developments and support within the Scottish education system.

The policy of DSM is established, but the associated practices and procedures require development. Procedural details need to be improved and ensure that the principles underlying the scheme and actual practice accords. Schools, especially smaller schools and primaries, require support in 'managing' DSM and therefore adequate support structures are vital. The maintenance of an appropriate computer system in-school and linked to the EA is crucial. Head teachers felt that training in 'management', especially financial management would be beneficial. At the EA-level, there is a need for reform of financial procedures and budgeting to ensure adequate budgets, forward planning, auditing and monitoring. Budgetary and resource constraint is an ongoing issue which affects the potential and practice of DSM. The Labour Government has pledged increased funding for education, therefore it is necessary to consider where resources are required and for what purposes. Crucially, there needs to be awareness of and attempts to develop more co-ordinated and coherent management practices at school and EA levels in which managerial decision-making, resources and the links to teaching and learning are explored and made central. DSM should not be simply about objective managerial decisions taken by seniors in the school hierarchy, it should facilitate a 'culture' of devolved management for educational improvements throughout the system.

Reorganisation had created 'upheaval' in the education system and budget cuts compounded problems. There is a need for adequate resourcing of the education and local government systems and appropriate use of such monies. Some of the smaller and urban EAs were especially concerned about budget cuts. However, many of these EAs had been more successful in developing a lean central structure. Reorganisation

presented the opportunity for the education function to be reformed. EAs need to consider the most appropriate organisational structures and purposes for the future education system. The development of the Scheme of Delegation needs to be considered, especially its impact on the education system and concerns about confused lines of accountability and increased bureaucracy. Similarly, there needs to be clarity about the nature and purpose of corporate working within the authorities. The EAs must continue to develop policies which are appropriate to the scale and nature of their area and schools. In managing the transition through Reorganisation and developing the education system post- Reorganisation, the EA needs to develop a 'culture' which involves schools through communication and consultation. This suggests developing a potentially 'closer' relationship between school and EA and the need for changed practices on both sides.

The relationship between schools and EAs is altering and must continue to do so. There is an ongoing need to 'disentangle' the respective roles of schools and EAs, although such a process is not straight-forward when operational and strategic issues are not easily demarcated. The consensus appears to be that EAs should be less interventionist and schools should assume increased responsibilities to develop managerial powers, but that the two bodies are linked within the education *system*. Therefore, it is the development of a new partnership based on a shift in culture that is crucial. Within schools, the management role and purpose of the head teacher especially must be developed. Rather than concerns about 'fragmented' roles, head teachers should be seeking means to develop and integrate approaches to resource management, IT, the school development plan and educational decisions. Furthermore, the endurance of hierarchy must be challenged and concern about delegation of managerial powers within schools promoted. Through delegation, consultation and communication with staff, a closer linking of managerial decisions and classroom factors may be achieved. Furthermore, such an approach creates a sense of ownership, improved morale and ethos, plus the promotion of a 'culture' of management linked and adapted to the needs of the education system. Similarly, such a culture is integral to the developing role of the EA. The EA must seek to and prove that they 'add value'. Therefore, there is a need to nurture relationships with schools

and improve relationships with other Departments of the Council. Although the service provision role may be diminishing, it is still perceived as important, therefore attention has to be paid to changing practices and delivery mechanisms within a complex environment. Schools and EAs need to consider carefully how they are going to 'manage change' and to develop practices for the future education system. Management practices have relevance but must take account of the complex environment and internally distinctive nature of the education system. Thus, there is a need to differentiate between generic management practices, those appropriate, inappropriate and amenable to the education system. The shift in practice must be accompanied by a shift in culture advocating managerial and organisational reforms. This returns to the importance of linking language, values, meanings, beliefs and practices.

The Study of Education Policy

My research has focussed on the process, nature, perception and practice of policy. I believe that this has been a vital and interesting exploration of the policies of DSM and Reorganisation, placing them in their historical and cultural 'contexts', discerning the discourse and 'text' associated with their promotion and crucially considering their 'consequences', in terms of the perceptions and practices of those involved. The influence of 'policy sociology' has been beneficial in this approach. However, this research 'method' requires further development and definition, especially in relation to its stance on macro/ micro issues and structure and agency (Raab 1994a). One fruitful approach is through the study of discourse.

The study of education policy is relatively recent. To an extent, its development has been reactive to changes in education policy occurring since the 1980s. This reactive and sometimes limited development is not satisfactory and the study of education policy needs to move on from this 'cross-roads' (Ball & Shilling 1994). There is concern that 'policy analysis' in education "has been dominated by commentary and critique rather than empirical research" (Taylor *et al* 1997:40, Ball 1990). This is a situation which is being rectified and must continue to do so. The development of qualitative approaches which seek to explore and explain policy, especially through

the language and articulated assumptions of those involved is especially important. While in-depth qualitative research is helpful, single-site case studies and ethnographic work should not be the only approach. There is a need for cross-sectional and longitudinal, multi-site and multi-level research to trace the policy, process, perception and practice of policy.

The study of 'policy' in order to gain understandings is not easy. 'Policy' is particularly difficult to define and delimit. I have focussed on DSM and Reorganisation, but as an officer commented: "It's very difficult, you know, to separate DEM, local government reorganisation and opting out. It just tends to get tangled up with each other". A ream of other policies could be added to this list, e.g. CCT, parental choice, league tables. Furthermore, policies do not simply interact with each other, but also with wider structural changes:

I think we've also got the difficulty that society's changing at such a rapid pace that it would be very, very difficult to unpick what could be laid at the door of DMR from all sorts of influences that are going on. (SRCSS3).

A specific policy cannot be treated in isolation from the wider historical traditions, cultural assumptions, structural changes and policy 'mix'.

Even within the above qualifications, there is the issue that 'policy' cannot simply be judged on its internal nature. Perception, practice and process must be considered:

Policies, as we've seen, are useful, but blunt, instruments. Under the best of circumstance, they can influence the allocation of resources, the structure of schooling, and the content of practice; but those changes take time and often have unexpected effects. (Elmore & McLaughlin 1988:60).

The mediation, negotiation and interpretation of policies are as important as the policy per se. Furthermore, policies must be considered in their long-term evolution as well as the short-term adoption. My research has sought to capture an element of the processual and evolutionary nature of policy, but this is constrained by the time limits placed on my fieldwork. Especially for Reorganisation, future research is required to build upon and juxtapose with the present research and to evaluate the developing practices, policies and perceptions. Policy is never "static" (SRCSS5). The research

presented does not fully represent the policies of DSM and Reorganisation as they exist today and in the future.

Nevertheless, that change is always potential does not mean that it is always realised. Research must trace the existence of continuity rather than being pre-occupied with the 'rhetoric of reform' (Taylor *et al* 1997). As Pollitt (1990:62) comments limitations on change may be "unsurprising" as it is a "formidable, long-term task" especially in bureaucratic organisations. Nevertheless, researchers must also be sensitive to the capacity for a diversity of experience. Frances *et al* (1991:5) explain:

In our intellectual culture *generalization* is the driving motive. But is there any necessary virtue in such a search for generalization?. Perhaps particularization and difference should be promoted more forcefully.

My research indicates the existence of both. Qualitative methodology sensitive to the subtleties and complexities of the emerging education system is vital, which while theoretically informed does not impose nor determine the emerging findings.

There is scope for development in policy analysis both theoretically and empirically. Kemmis (1990) has argued that the study of education policy is important as this is pertinent especially to practitioners, as well as researchers. The argument being that practitioners are concerned with the detail and practice of policy, rather than broad theoretical concerns. Such a process was evident in my research where the issues of practical details and how to 'implement' and 'manage' policies were utmost, e.g. concerns about computing, training and finance. There is a need to understand the empirical practices and related perceptions of policies. Nevertheless, these perceptions are not purely pragmatic but grounded in wider political, cultural and structural assumptions. The study of discourse and qualitative methods are useful for exploring the "meaning, process and context" (Devine 1995:138). This requires an attempt to understand and explain these perceptions, languages, policies and processes, to explore the nature of discourse and discursive strategies, the presences and absences, coherences and contradictions, the values explicit and implicit. There is need for theoretical development. The problem is that: "we need a set of more specific and carefully grounded concepts and descriptors" (Ball *et al* 1994:93).

Concepts of 'markets', 'hierarchy' and 'network' require development and consideration of their relationship to wider theoretical issues, e.g. structure and agency. Models are simply that and cannot convey the subtleties and complexities of change and continuity. Wise (1984:86) argues:

Much of the collective effort of policy makers, researchers and administrators is aimed at making the school reality conform to the rational model. We then bemoan the fact that schools fail to conform to the model. It just may be that we need a new paradigm.

The study of education policy requires development and justification as a discipline. There is a need to develop both empirical study and theoretical explanation. However, as Hammersely (1984) outlined this is inherently problematic. A proposed solution is through the development of research programmes sensitive to these issues. It is hoped that my research offers a contribution to this debate. Nevertheless, there remains many issues to be resolved, addressed and developed.

An Agenda For Future Research

My research has focussed on the policies of DSM and Reorganisation, especially as perceived and 'enacted' by head teachers and education officers, with particular reference to the roles of schools and EAs plus the relationships between the two. A number of issues have been explored and explanations and understandings sought. Many of these issues would benefit from further research, as would issues which have been raised, emerged or are inherent in my research but could not be fully explored within the present findings. The research approach I have adopted requires development and further exploration, in particular the insights and understandings gained by talking to those involved and considering issues of discourse, structure and agency. Such a focus should influence and underlie the 'empirical' and theoretical investigations outlined below.

1. Conceptual and Theoretical Development

My research has indicated that discourses of 'Scottishness', 'Partnership' and 'Efficiency' appear dominant in contemporary perceptions and explanations of the Scottish education system. There is evidence that concepts can have considerable

longevity and also adaptability. Nevertheless, central conceptual and theoretical issues prevalent in these discourses and in generating an adequate understanding of the emerging education system require development. There is an assumption that education is 'distinctive'. However, this requires both philosophical and empirical exploration; e.g. are the changes in education distinctive from those across the public sector and indeed increasingly globally?. Furthermore, there is a strong value-based argument about the 'publicness' of education. This requires justification and definition rather than assumption and assertion. Both the 'distinctive' and 'public' qualities of education have been challenged by the 'efficiency' discourse. However, this discourse relies on the theoretically under-developed foundations of the New Right and NPM, the former being highly abstract and idealised, the latter empirically-driven, and both being an eclectic mixture of propositions rather than a coherent 'theory'. There is a recognition that the world is changing, but that existing concepts and appendages to them, such as quasi-market and post-bureaucratic organisation, may not fully capture the nature of the emerging system. There is a need also to consider how these concepts relate to wider theoretical transformations and philosophical inquiry. Issues of discourse are vital in this development. It is necessary to research the construction, mediation, 'enactment' and dominance of discourses. The linkage between individual beliefs, socialisation, collective meaning and discourse requires exploration. These are formidable tasks.

2. DSM and Reorganisation

The findings presented can only 'capture' a part of the process and policy of DSM and Reorganisation which will continue to develop, evolve and change. There is need for ongoing research in this area. There are practical issues, such as the best mechanisms for delivering DSM and the structuring of EAs. However, these relate to issues such as the nature and acceptability of 'freedom within a framework' for schools and the perceived role of EAs. Issues of process, perception and discourse are fundamental.

3. The Impact of a Labour Government

In May 1997, Labour won the general election, ending eighteen years of Conservative rule. Any future study of the emerging education and local government systems must consider the implications of the Labour Government. New Labour is promoting an electoral project. However, at present they are operating within broad economic boundaries set by the Conservatives and retain a monetarist approach. The extent to which a new 'social democratic' project is being created requires consideration. This raises wider issues about the nature, power and policies of political parties and the influence of structure and agency. Thus far, there have been shifts in education policy which may differentiate the system now emerging. In Scotland, opting out has been abolished, eroding the 'market' nature of reform and emphasising also a 'Scottish dimension'. Throughout Britain, the assisted places scheme has been abolished, also eroding market forces, and increased resourcing has been promised for education. The impact of these shifts on the perceptions and practices of schools and EAs requires study. Shifts in language promoted and dominant discourse, especially between central and local levels should be considered. Importantly, does the ending of opting out alter the relationship of school and EA, enhancing the notion of 'partnership' and 'dependency'?

4. The Role of the School

My research has focussed on the 'role of the school' in terms of the head teacher's perceptions and practices mainly. There is a need to build on research which considers the impact of DSM within schools and as affecting teachers, pupils and parents (Adler *et al* 1996, 1997, Munn 1997a, Raab *et al* 1997, Wilson *et al* 1995). Fundamentally, the implications of educational reform on 'teaching and learning' must be explored. The extent to which a 'gap' between education and management exists and is problematic is pertinent (Bowe & Ball 1992). Conflict or coherence in the notion of 'professional managers' must be analysed. Within schools, issues of purpose and roles are crucial.

5. The Role of the EA

Similarly, the roles and purpose of the EA is an ongoing research issue. In particular, the interpretations of a strategic and enabling role, which are manifesting varying responses and approaches. I have focussed on officer interpretations, therefore there is scope for research into the members attitudes, awareness and influence concerning educational reform. The dynamic of 'officer- member' relations has not been explored. Furthermore, the relationship between the Education Department and the other Departments of the Council is an interesting area of inquiry. In my research, the EA perceived itself as distinctive and 'superior' in many instances, but requires to co-operate and work 'corporately' in some instances with other Departments.

6. The Relationship Between School and EA

This relationship is being transformed and may be in a state of transition. My research suggests that there may not be one static and universal 'relationship' but that *relationships* may be emerging. Furthermore, if the notion of networks is to be taken seriously, it is necessary to consider the relationship between school and EA, and with other bodies also, e.g. parents, central government, private sector and churches.

7. Centralisation/ Decentralisation

An inherent theme throughout my research has been the pervasive and superficially 'paradoxical' forces of decentralisation and centralisation (Busher & Saran 1993). Although the discourse, promotion and policy of decentralisation has been pervasive, a strong centralisation of control exists also. This is an issue which requires further empirical, conceptual and theoretical investigation. It is an issue with wider implications and ramifications than simply the education system.

8. The Role of Central Government

Interviewing was not conducted at central government level. However, the discourse promoted and the 'policy texts' provided by central government were analysed and influenced research at the 'local level'. The traditional 'partnership' was between central and local governments. The changing roles and relationships between these 'partners' requires analysis. Consideration could be given to the form of discourse

promoted by central government and the extent to which it seeks to accord with educational practitioners. Also, do differences in this 'partnership' and practices emerge between Labour or Conservative central government and local governments. There is a need to develop an adequate conceptualisation and understanding of how the 'local' and 'national state' operate and interact in the Scottish education system.

9. Scottish Parliament

Under the Labour Government and following a public referendum, the Scottish Parliament is to become operational by 2000. This raises questions about the developing system of 'educational administration' and the added dimension of a Scottish parliament within the central government, local government, school axis. There are arguments that given the relatively small scale of Scotland, education could become a function centralised under the Scottish Parliament to achieve economies of scale, strategic capacity and a national system. However, the implications for the decentralised structure must be explored, crucially the role of local government in education but also the implications at school-level. The policies and practices towards education linked to the Scottish Parliament require ongoing research.

10. 'Scottishness'

Historically, a strong perception of 'Scottishness' has influenced the origins and subsequent development of Scottish education. Such a belief in the distinctiveness and nature of Scottish political, cultural and civil traditions affecting education was held and promoted by my interviewees. My research was not an exploration of Scottish identity, however, it appears that such work is relevant to fuller understanding of the Scottish systems and society. Grant (1982) and Robertson (1984) suggested that the failure of devolution in 1979 created a 'crisis of identity' in Scotland which enabled a deterioration and Anglicisation of Scottish education. The current resurgence of Scottish nationalism and the establishment of a 'Scottish Parliament' make this an issue of contemporary relevance (Paterson 1997). There are issues related to the location and perception of Scotland within Britain. Concepts of national identity and nation-state require analysis.

11. Globalisation

The nature and likely consequences of 'globalisation' for all of the above requires exploration and explanation. The process of 'decentralisation' alongside 'centralisation' suggest the possibility of increasing similarities yet important difference between localities. Taylor *et al* (1997:59) discuss the "twin elements of globalisation, notably global integration and national fragmentation". The implications for Britain must be contemplated. Specifically, the resurgence or diminution of Scottish political, cultural and civil traditions and the implications for the education system (Paterson 1997).

12. 'Management of Change'

My research has considered the process, perception and practices of policy 'change' in the education and local government systems. In the processing, mediating and sometimes limiting of that change, the 'management' of change has been touched upon. However, there is a place for a more detailed and practical interpretation of how change arises, is 'managed' and institutionalised. This could be developed alongside a structure and agency focus. Evidently there are broad structural changes requiring localised changes. Yet at the local level change can be 'managed' in various ways, as evident between EAs and schools. In such a process, key individuals may be influential and make a significant difference. My interviewees were guaranteed anonymity, therefore direct actions and comments could not be attributed. Nevertheless, the personality, vision, discourse and 'management of change' generated by Directors of Education can have wide influence. As McPherson & Raab (1988) demonstrated, a detailed study of the elite and policy community operational in Scotland in recent years would be valuable. In particular, study of their discursive practices, the framing of the 'context' of 'reform' and the consequently proposed necessity and nature of change and its management would be interesting. Management of change issues raise interesting questions about attempts to alter culture through the promotion of certain language, meanings, beliefs, values and symbols. Therefore, this would provide a means to explore the practical implications of attempts to alter culture and discourse for managerial and practical purposes.

There is a vast and varied research agenda relating to studying and understanding education policy. Issues range from the essentially empirical and pragmatic to the ultimately theoretical and philosophical. Developments related to policy sociology, structure and agency and discourse analysis may prove helpful. Furthermore, such developments are not related simply to the study of 'education' but to wider and multi-disciplinary issues also. The study of 'education policy' should not be treated as completely autonomous from wider issues concerning the study of policy, political science and interdisciplinary insights (Raab 1994a, b, Taylor *et al* 1997). I have outlined various issues and foci which I perceive as necessary future research agendas, nevertheless the scope for study and analysis is widespread.

Conclusions

This thesis has explored the policies of DSM and Reorganisation. A broad focus on the process, policy, perception and practice of these measures has been adopted. Consideration has been especially on the impact at the 'local level' of schools and EAs, affecting their roles and relationships with each other. It is evident that issues of process, policy, perception and practice are inter-woven. Furthermore, a linking feature over these aspects and time and space has been the prevalence of the discourses of 'Scottishness' and 'Partnership', plus more recently 'Efficiency' linked to 'markets' and 'managerialism'. These may not be the only available discourses but they appear to be the dominant ones. In pursuing my research a focus on the "contexts, texts and consequences" (Taylor *et al* 1997:44) has been useful.

The 'context' and 'process' of DSM and Reorganisation was not simply considered in contemporary terms, but also in the historical nature, evolution and conceptualisation of the Scottish education system. The discourse of 'Scottishness' is pervasive from the origins of the education system to the present day. Nevertheless, the policy and practice of the education system has changed markedly over the years. Originally, the system was highly decentralised. However, from the start of state involvement, due to the alleged cohesive and consensual nature of Scotland, a centralisation of control was accepted. The later development of local government was accommodated within this 'settlement'. Thus although 'partnership' was a British discourse, its emphasis on

collectivist and public provision could be interpreted as according with the 'Scottish myth'. The structure, policy and 'discourse' associated with the education and local government systems have been challenged since the 1970s. A new discourse of 'efficiency' related to a particular political and economic agenda has been promoted. The language of 'efficiency' dominates the 'policy texts' of DSM and Reorganisation. Codd argued:

Policy documents... are ideological texts which have been constructed in a particular context. The task of deconstruction begins with a recognition of that context. (Codd 1988: 243- 244).

Nevertheless, some allusion to and re- interpretation of 'Scottishness' and 'Partnership' are evident also and utilised as a means to justify, legitimate and interpret the policies. In the process and mediation of the policy, scope for a 'Scottish dimension' remains, plus a 'Partnership' between school and EA, but concern to create 'efficiency' also.

Given the timing of my research, there was limited previous research conducted into DSM (Adler *et al* 1996,1997, Raab *et al* 1997, Wilson *et al* 1995) and no empirical study of Reorganisation. The material that existed suggested that the policy of DSM was being realised slowly and involved a range of practical issues and perceptions at school- level. Little consideration of the EA- level was provided. In developing their research focus, consideration of issues from the early English experience of LMS was inherent. A key issue was that LMS was emerging and developing around notions of 'markets' and 'management' which were often discordant with the practices and values of 'educationalists'. Furthermore, the drive to market forces and 'efficient site management' placed the LEA in a precarious position with a need to defend and define its role and rationale. With the promotion of the over- arching 'efficiency' discourse, this promotion of 'markets' and 'management' has relevance to Scotland, however given the differing practices, policies and perceptions, the retention of a 'Scottish dimension' was possible.

The lack of prior knowledge as to how DSM and Reorganisation would be perceived, proceed and operate in Scotland required an exploratory and inductive research

approach. Although the previous historical traditions, theoretical issues and experience in England, may have relevance and informed my research they could not be used deterministically. The perception and practice of these policies would depend on "the key players" (Ham 1989:41). Consequently, it was necessary to speak to head teachers and education officers, to encounter their 'assumptive worlds' (McPherson & Raab 1988, Raab 1994a), and to seek to understand what they understood to be 'reality' (Sayer 1992). Low (in Oliver & Drewry 1996: 47- 48) commented:

We live under a system of tacit understandings. But the understandings themselves are not always understood.

It was hoped that by studying the discourse and language, the perception of those involved and to interact with them, I would come closer to an 'understanding', although the 'relative autonomy' to discover an 'objective reality' was never assumed (Sayer 1992). I have presented what appeared to be the reality as presented by my interviewees. This is not perfect but perhaps as close as one could hope.

What emerged was a mass of detailed issues, broader perceptions, indications of explanations and potential theorisation. Where my research 'crosses over' with previous work in Scotland, there is a broad similarity. Therefore I think one can say with a level of confidence that roles at school- level are changing, in particular the head teacher's position and identity is altering, due to managerial drives. Furthermore, to develop DSM a range of practical factors are necessary and require development, e.g. training, communication and computer support. Overall, DSM is a popular policy, but a balance between benefits and problems has to be struck. However, my work on the role of the EA and relationship with the school, plus the impact of Reorganisation was novel. Reorganisation was placing further 'strain' on the education system. Some schools were concerned and frustrated by the transition period. EAs were attempting to define their purpose, policies, structures and relationships with schools. Budget constraint was placing considerable problems on the development of both Reorganisation and DSM. As anticipated, the combination of these policies was altering the nature of the education system. However, the notion that EAs may be redundant was simply not accepted. Schools perceived a range of important and integral roles for future EAs. Although there were shifts in the

relationship between these bodies, some notion of 'partnership' remained prevalent, as schools and EAs remained dependent on each other in many ways. Hence, roles and relationships were shifting and transforming. Although there was some 'managerial' change, the 'market' reforms were less popular and frequently resisted. Thus, the notions of efficiency, markets and management were not being fully realised. As Ball (1994a:10) commented:

Policy is both text and action, words and deeds, it is what is enacted as well as what is intended. Policies are always incomplete insofar as they relate to or map on to the 'wild profusion' of local practice.

The need to treat policy as a process and consider the perceptions and practices of those involved, not simply the static 'policy text', appears justified.

The purpose of my research was not to evaluate the outcomes of policy on some objective criteria of merit. Rather it was to attempt to understand the process, policy, perception and practice of DSM and Reorganisation through exploration of 'contexts, texts and consequences', recognising also the influence of wider policy shifts, historical traditions, institutionalised practices and cultural assumptions. In such a process the consideration and deconstruction of the discourses of 'Scottishness', 'partnership' and 'efficiency' has been useful. These discourses were discerned from the historical conceptualisations and my interviewees' language and assumptions, they were not arbitrarily imposed. The three discourses can operate within the same period in time and are in themselves only partial explanations of the 'practical' development of the education system. Indeed, the concept of 'Scottishness' which is most fundamental is based on assumption, assertion and selective evidence, rather than a fully considered critique. Nevertheless, it is this pervasive perception which is important. The traditional acceptance of hierarchy and belief in a cohesive, centralised consensus remains. The most acceptable 'network' is the 'policy network' of the traditional 'policy community' and 'market' forces are to be minimised not to threaten the collective order. Therefore, despite notions of individualism and fragmentation in market forces, education remains a *system* in which central government, local government and school are interdependent. In such a process, issues of discourse, policy and practice are integral.

Although change is occurring beyond Scotland and indeed this change influences the 'context' and action within Scotland, it is perceived that Scotland remains 'distinctive' in many ways. Furthermore, 'education' is distinctive within local government and public policy. The interactions between structure and agency are complex. The notion of 'Scottishness' and 'partnership' provide explanations of policy, guide action and furnish a sense of identity. In researching and seeking to understand the movement to decentralisation and centralisation in education and local government, issues from the British context are useful but a perception and practice of a 'Scottish dimension' remain also. Therefore, within wide structural and global trends, there remains scope for some 'local' diversity. Furthermore, within Scotland, variation exists, e.g. between EAs, primary and secondary sectors and scales of school. However, this variation is subsumed by belief in a distinctive 'Scottish', i.e. non-English, approach.

In many ways, the notion of 'freedom within a framework' captures the nature of the education system and the different actors and institutions within. There is a 'nested hierarchy' (Hay 1995) of 'structures' creating constraint and opportunity. Individuals, schools, EAs, the education system, the public sector and the Scottish traditions are all located within a broad 'framework' encompassing 'practical' factors, such as budget levels and established practices, political structures, deep-rooted perceptions and 'philosophical' assumptions linked to historical legacy, cultural traditions, received wisdom and a sense of collective identity. The practical, political, perceptual and philosophical were discursively articulated, combining to facilitate and constrain agency.

The situation is a complex and evolving one. It is too early to offer solid conclusions on the 'consequences' and 'outcomes' of DSM and Reorganisation. Teachers and officers had come to accept change as more or less constant, although they were capable of trying to minimise the extent to which this affected them. They believed furthermore that the education system would continue to change through periods of greater decentralisation and centralisation, market-based developments and

collectivist approaches. It is possible that the education and local government systems are in a transitional phase the outcomes of which will not be fully known in the short-term. There was an assumption that market forces would increasingly be promoted, hence the EAs developing contractual relationships with schools for services. However, the abolition of opting out and the capacity of EAs to retain a service role suggests that market- models may not become as dominant. The process is one of change and continuity. Over time, managerial approaches may become more acceptable or be resisted. What appears certain is that “No change was not an option” (INLOGOV 1989:6), what is less clear is the long- term nature and outcomes of change for the roles and relationships of schools and EAs.

There remains a need for further research into the changing and evolving system of education in Scotland. Taylor *et al* (1997: 24) explain:

policy process are ongoing and dynamic. When we describe policy we are thus attempting to capture and pin down something which is continually in process. This ‘process’ of policy has been integral to my research, linking issues of ‘contexts, texts and consequences’. However, this necessitates also “That any assessment at a specific point does not provide, in any sense, the ‘final word’ on the topic.” (*ibid*:52). The purpose has been exploratory research to offer illumination and raise issues, to stimulate and develop debate, hopefully encouraging and benefiting future research projects and understandings.

¹ E.g. the combination and re- interpretation of ‘Scottishness’, ‘Partnership’ and ‘Efficiency’ adopted to promote and justify School Boards and the Parents Charter.

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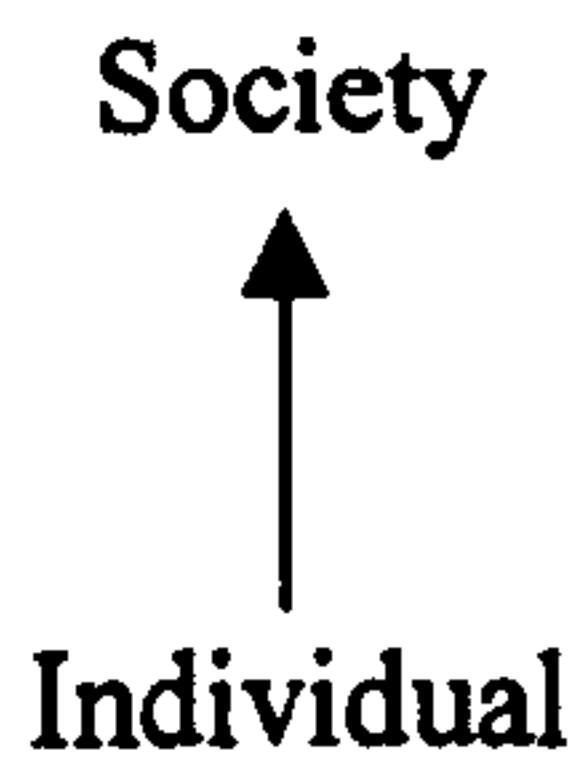
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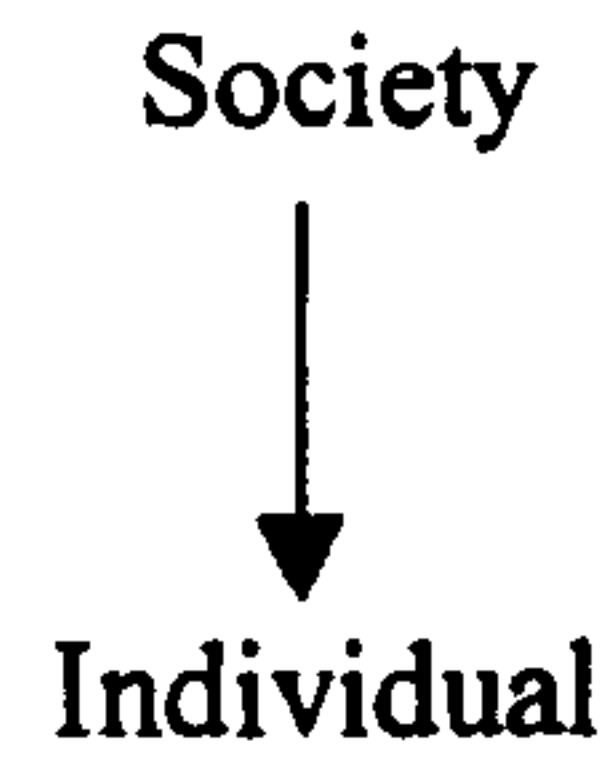
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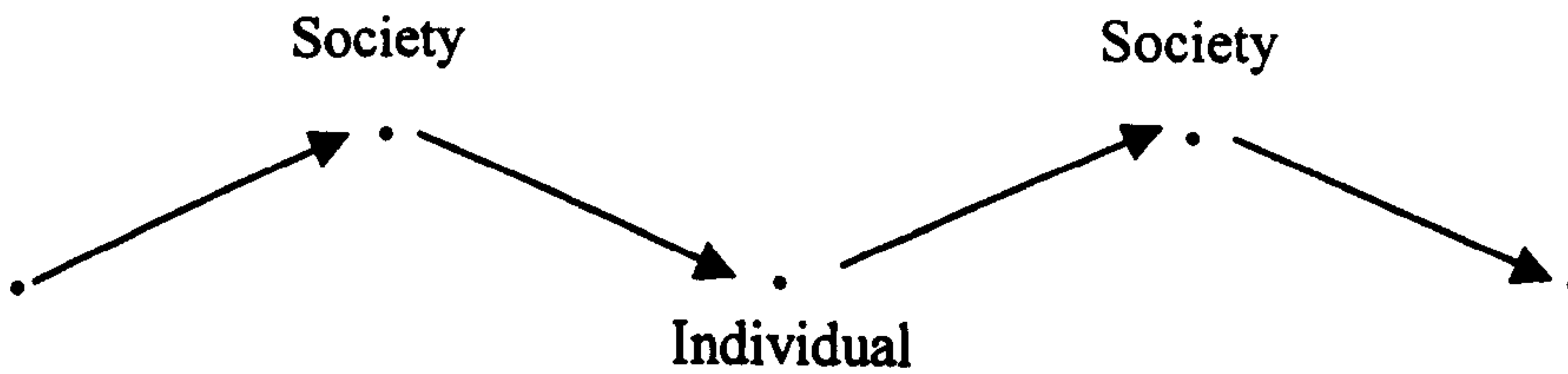
Appendix A:
Models of the relationship between structure and agency



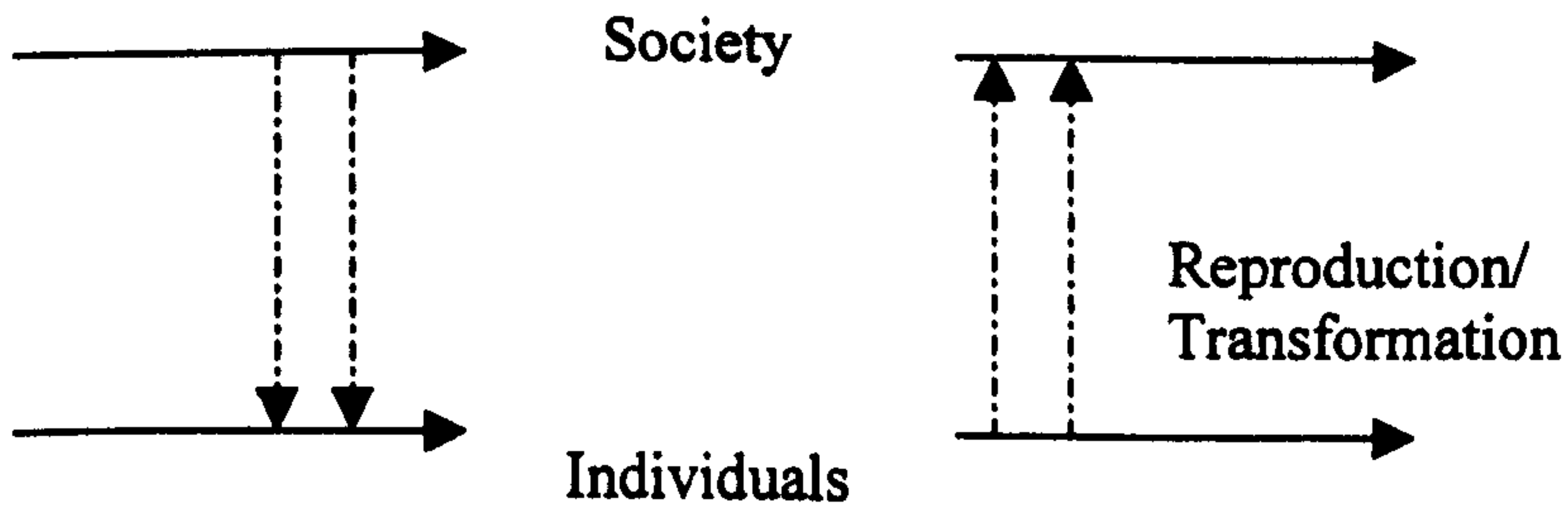
Model I The Weberian Stereotype
 "Voluntarism"



Model II The Durkheimian
 Stereotype "Reification"



Model III The "Dialectical" Conception
 "Illicit Identification"



Model IV The Transformational Model of Social Activity

Source: Bhasker 1989: 74-77

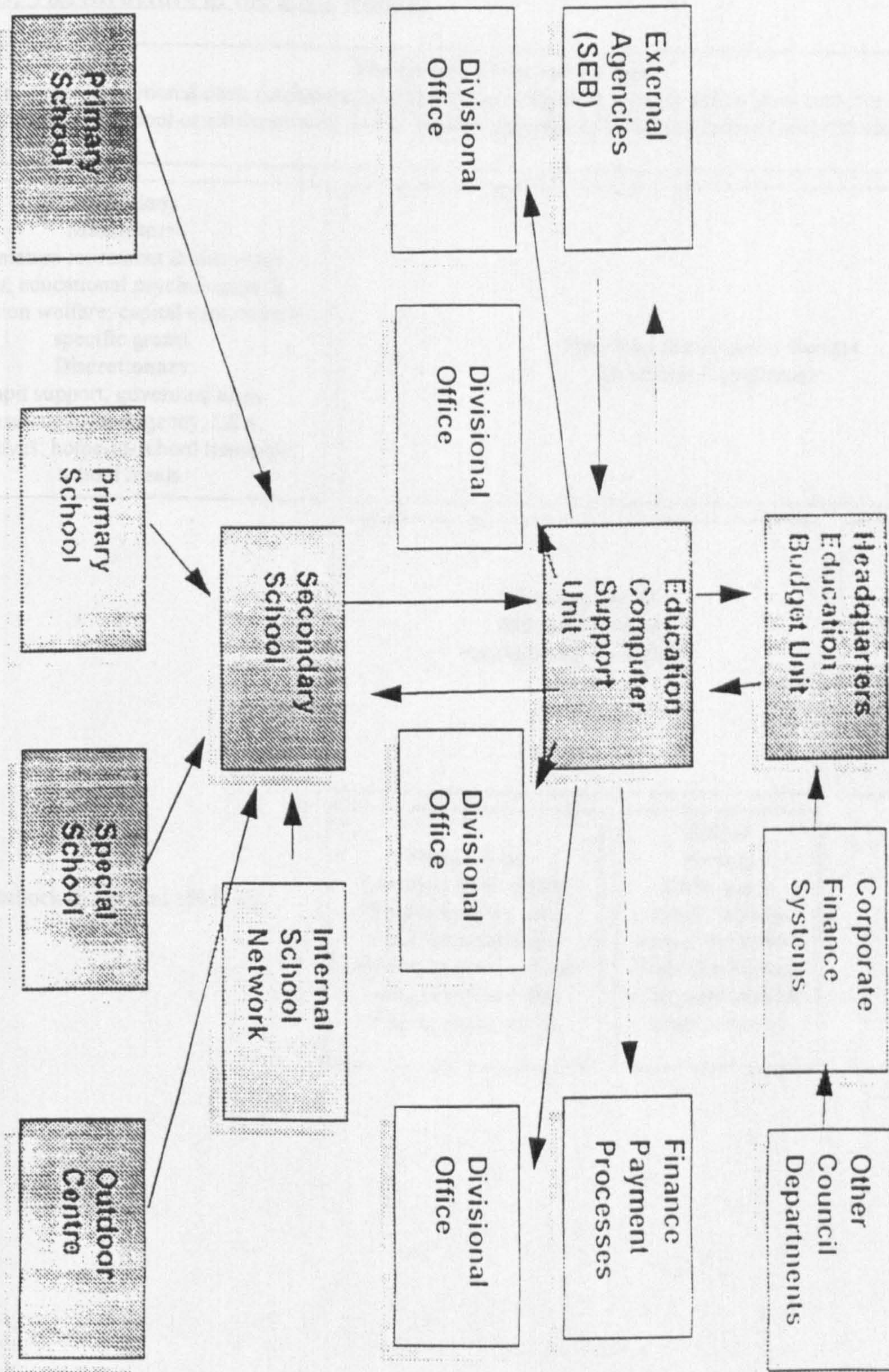
Appendix B: The Relationship Between the 'Partners' of SED, EA and Parents

date	policy focus	relations between SED and education authorities	relations between interests of parents and those of education authorities
1945	development of secondary schooling	initial consensus between SED and local authorities- consensus subsequently broke down	Interests of individual thought to coincide with those of the authority
1965	secondary school reorganisation	initial consensus between SED and local authorities lacking- consensus finally achieved through negotiation	
1981	parental choice of school	initial consensus between SED and local authorities lacking- solution imposed by legislation	interests of individual thought to conflict with those of the authority

Source: Adler *et al* 1987:306.

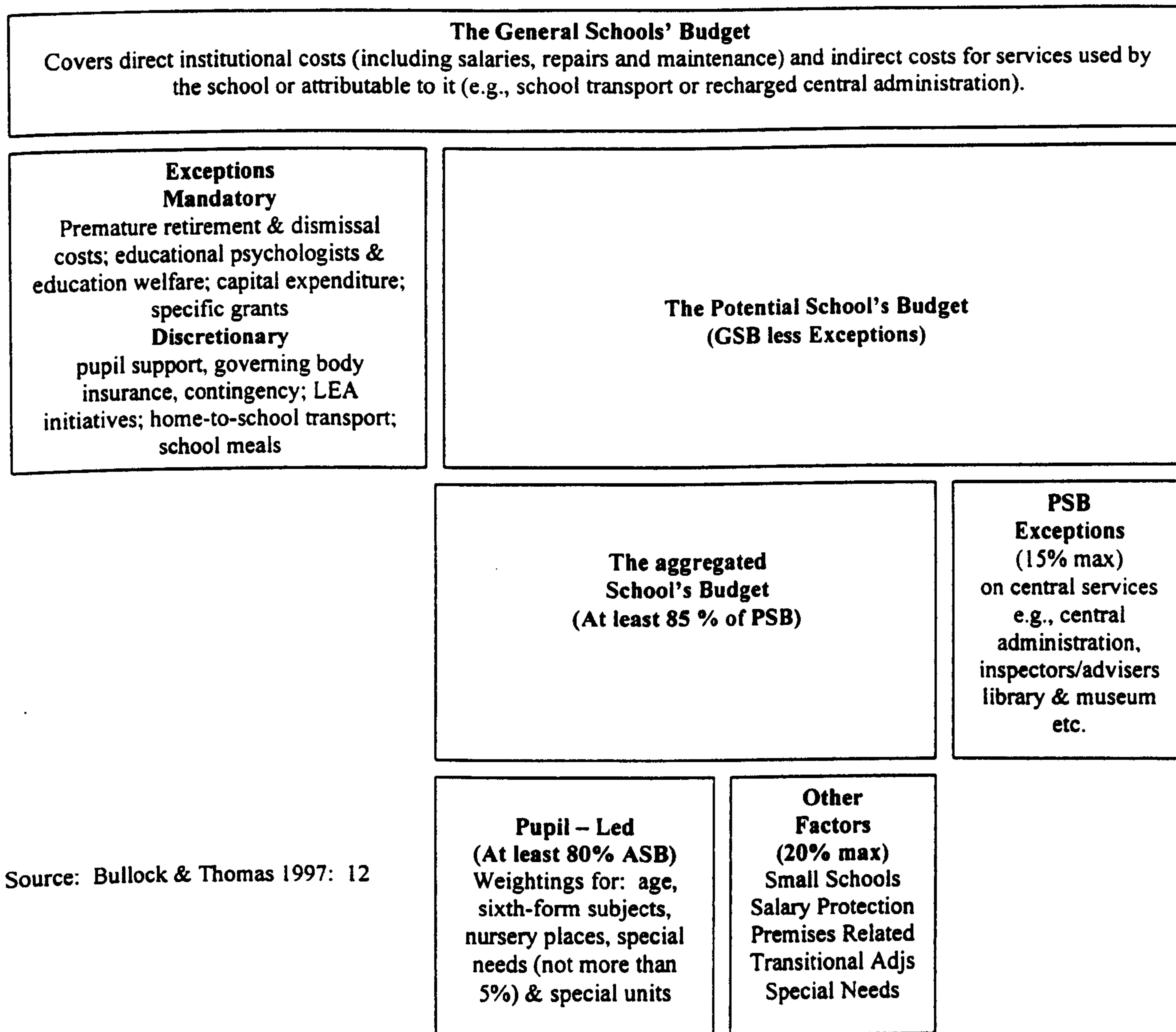
Appendix C: Strathclyde Education Establishments Management Information

SEEMIS - EDI NETWORK



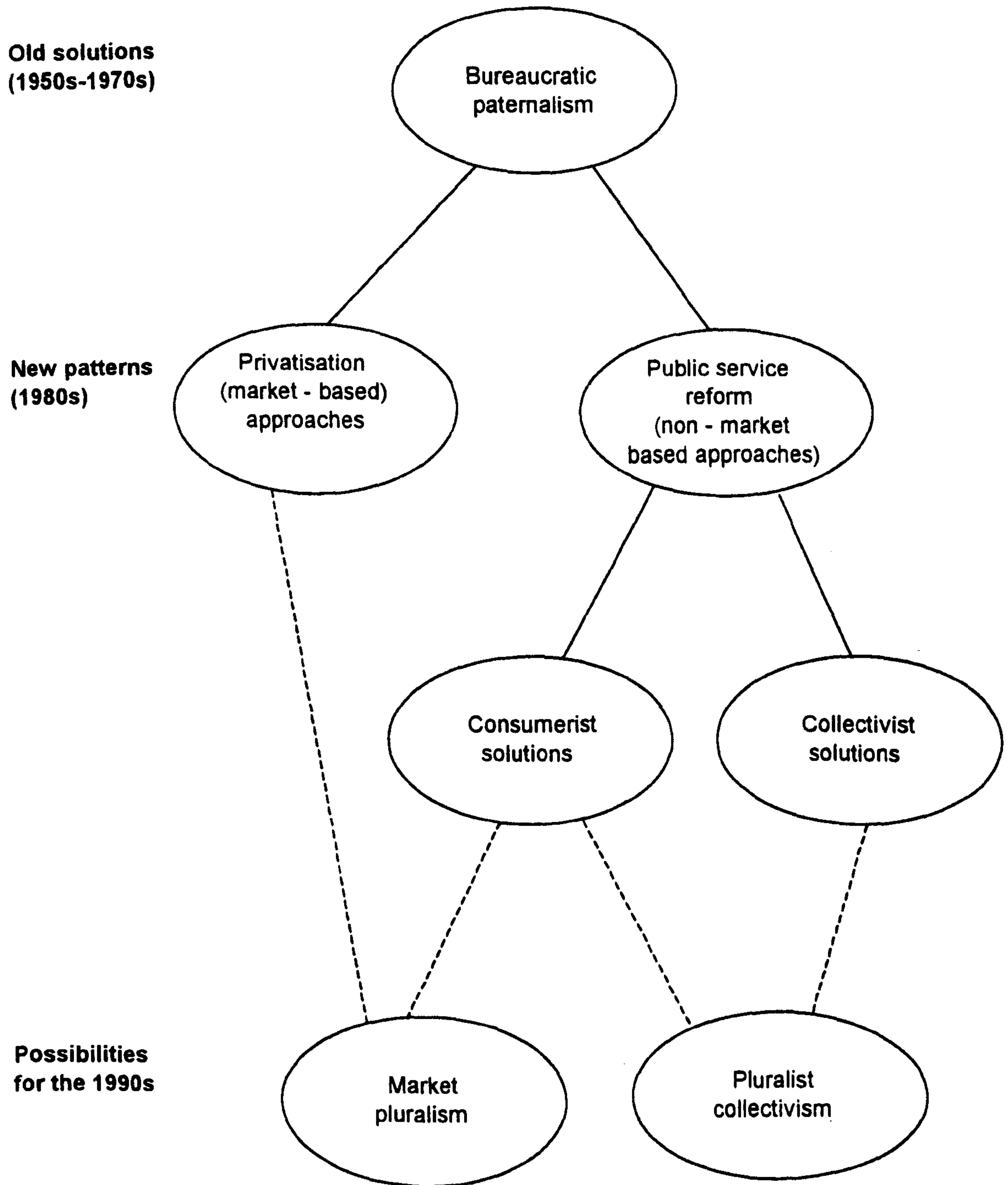
Source: Strathclyde Regional Council Education Department 1995.

Appendix D: The Structure of the LEA Budget



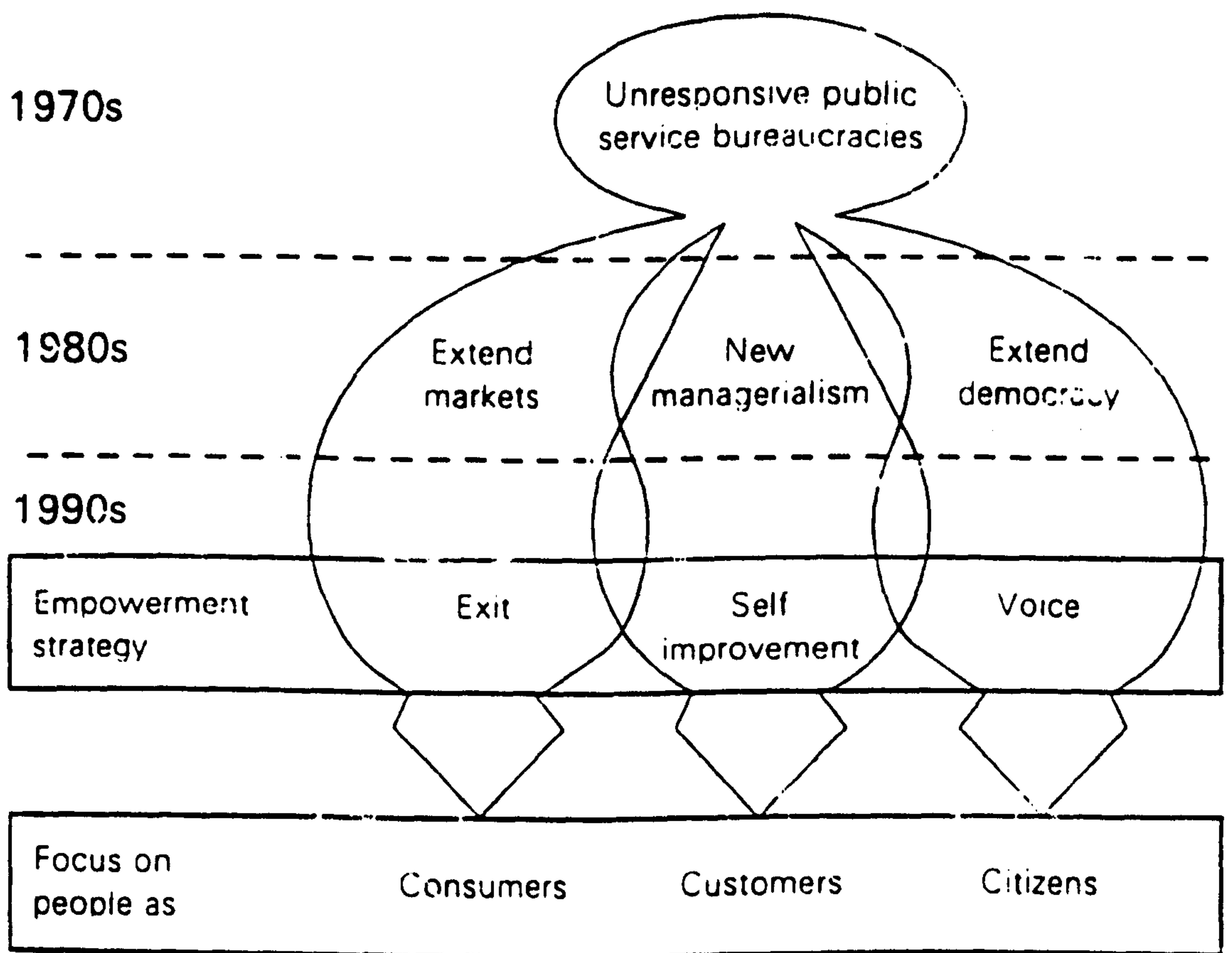
Source: Bullock & Thomas 1997: 12

Appendix E: Emerging Patterns of Relationships Between Local Authorities and Their Communities: A Conceptual Map



Source: Hambleton, Hoggett and Tolan 1989 :41

Appendix F: Public Service Reform Strategies



Source: Burns et al 1994: 22.

Appendix G: Levels of Devolved Resource Control

Type of devolution	Freedoms provided by managers
Nominal devolution	Monitoring of "shadow" budget; control over small budgets concerning special items, e.g. environmental improvements, good neighbour schemes.
Devolution	Control over revenue budgets and major capital budgets; non – restrictive rules of virement; opportunity for "carry forward" of budgets at the year end.
Radical Devolution	Control over own establishment levels; some control over regarding; freedom to raise additional revenue through service charges and to raise additional capital (via control over capital receipts); freedom to contract out.

Source: Burns et al 1994: 102

Appendix H: Contrasting Austrian and Neo- classical Theories of the Market

Topic	Austrian	Neo- classical
Theoretical focus (with respect to equilibrium)	Disequilibrium- the competitive forces compelling change.	Pattern of prices and quantities established in equilibrium.
Assessment of efficiency	Reliability of market forces in generating spontaneous corrections to changes occurring in disequilibrium.	Optimal allocation of resources in static equilibrium given by marginal social cost= price.
Role of entrepreneur	Crucial - perceives and acts upon opportunities for gain in bringing together buyers and sellers. Has no owned resources.	Role given little significance. In equilibrium there is no function for the entrepreneur to perform since all mutually advantageous exchanges are taking place.
Nature of competition	Inseparable from entrepreneurship. Is the process of providing alternative and more attractive opportunities to buyers and sellers.	Defined in terms of structure- i.e. number of buyers and sellers- not process. Ceases to be an active force in equilibrium.
Information	Market participants start out ignorant. Gain information by participating in the market. The market process generates and transmits continually changing information. Is efficient because it is decentralized and so economizes on information.	Information given externally to consumers and producers. Later know what consumers demand and what the least cost production methods are; consumers know prices and other attributes of products.
Monopoly	Distinguish between monopoly due to entrepreneurial activity and due to resource ownership. If due to former is because no other market participant is willing or able to supply the product. Former type should not be interfered with by government.	All monopolies regarded as allocatively inefficient and therefore socially undesirable because of focus on present outcome in which producer charges a price in excess of marginal cost.

Source: Levacic 1993a: 42.

Appendix I: Sample of Topic Guide for Head Teacher Interviews in Phase 1

1980s:

- * Roles and responsibilities- financial awareness and management powers?
- * Extent of decentralisation

DSM:

- * Initial reactions- development over time;
- * Changes in role of school: 'empowered establishment';
- * Freedom v. constraint:
- * Integration of school development plan, budget and managerial decision- making;
- * Adequacy of budget;
- * Consultation/ involvement of staff;
- * Implications of scale and nature of school;
- * School board;
- * Strategic v. operational management;
- * Accountabilities;
- * Support;
- * Training.

Role of Head Teacher:

- * Empowered- educational leader v. manager;
- * Workload;
- * Responsible for 'negotiating support' from EA.

Relationship with EA:

- * Changes & continuities;
- * Symbiotic;
- * Partnership;
- * Accountabilities;
- * Confusion between Region & Division (who is school's 1st point of contact);
- * Opting out;
- * Scottishness.

Relationships with Other Schools:

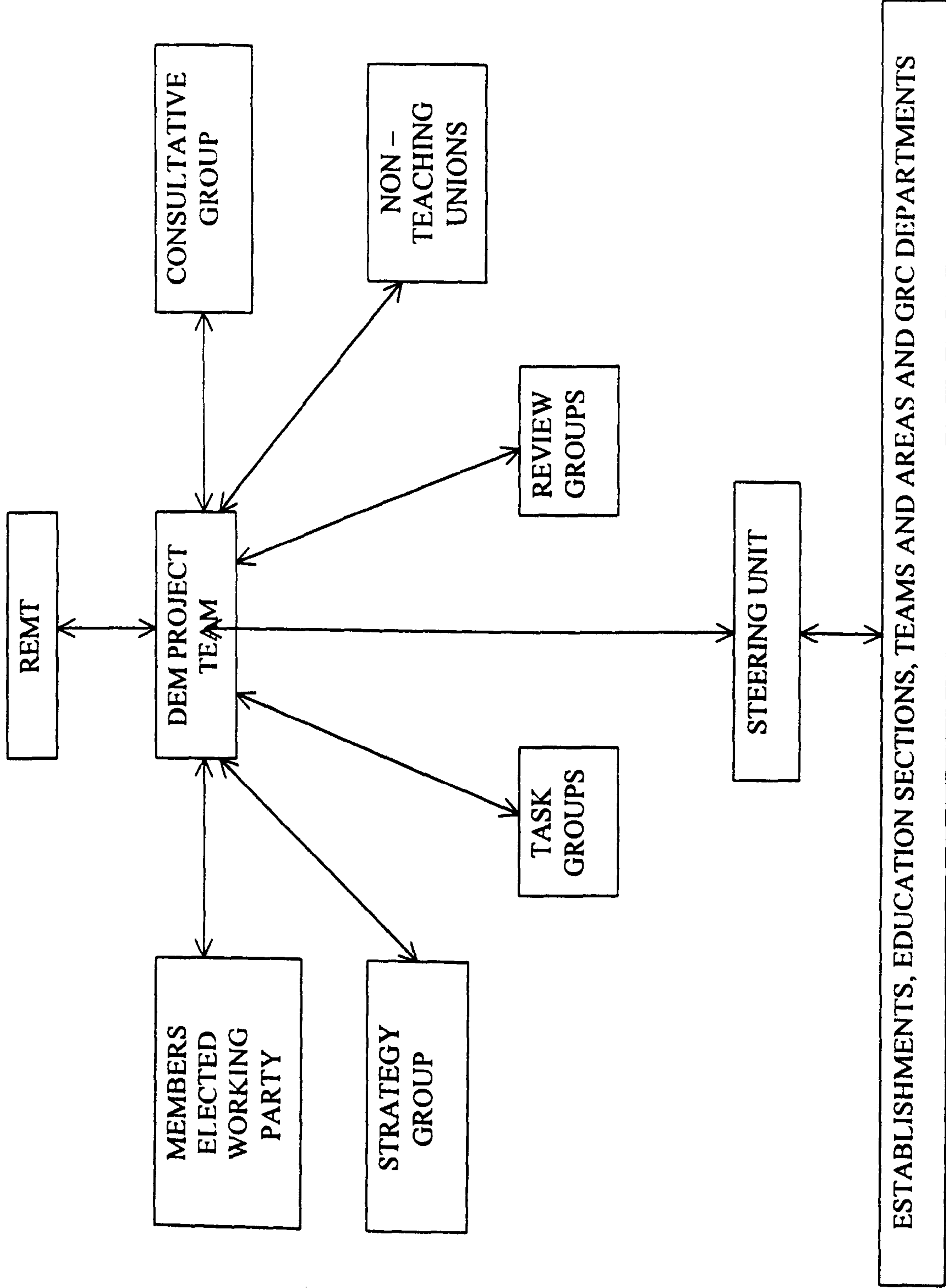
- * Competitive v. collaborative, co-operative;
- * Networks.

L.G. Reorganisation;

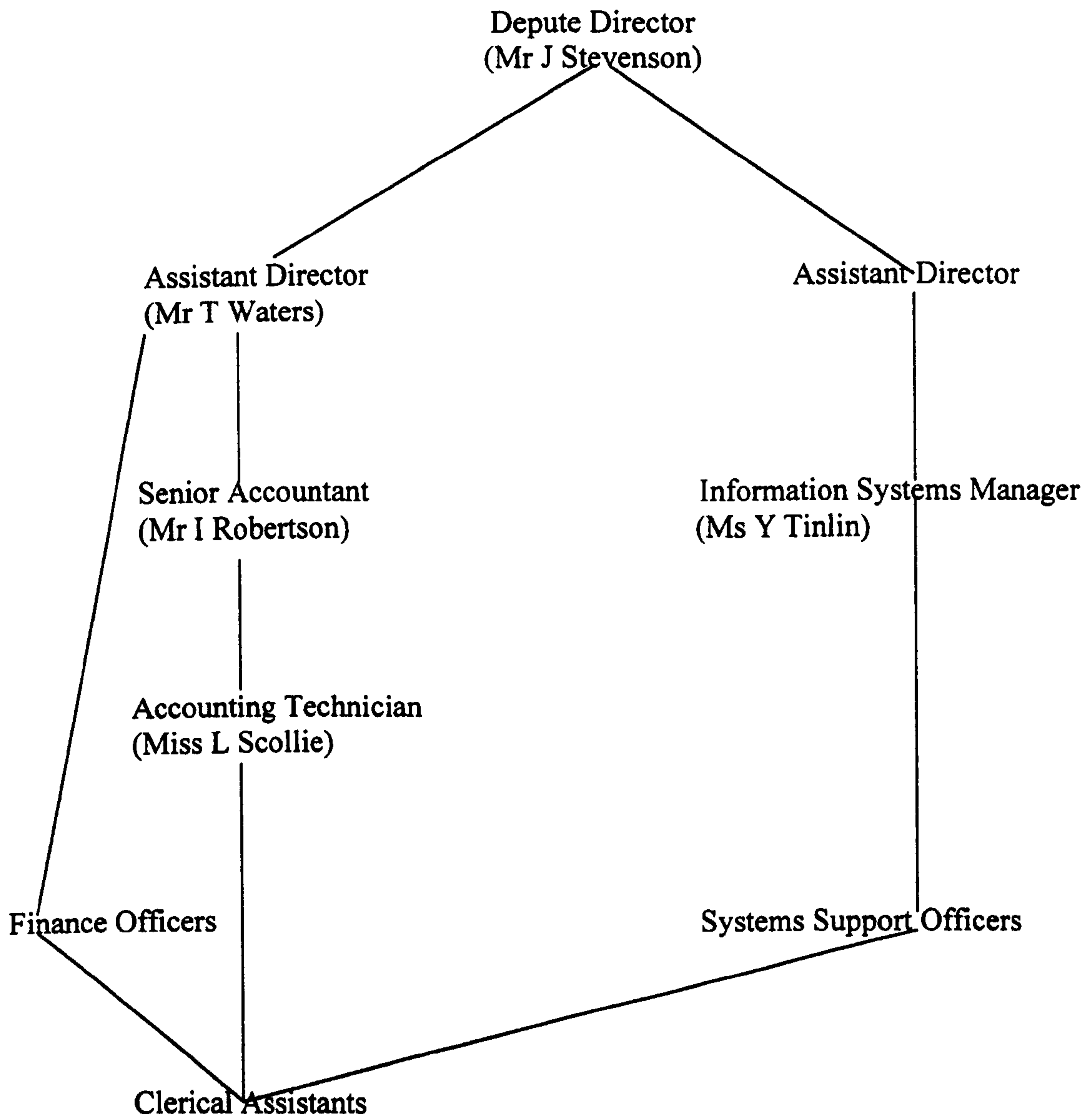
- * Implications for education service;
- * Should there be an EA per se;
- * Functions of an EA;
- * What if non- educational officers.

Appendix K: Grampian Regional Council - DEM Management Structure

Source: Grampian Regional Council Dept of Education 1994



Appendix L: DSM Support Structure – Highland Regional Council



Source: DSM Draft Manual Oct 1995

DMR Support

- In every school -** new technology administrative and budgeting systems, networked to divisional and headquarters offices
- In every school -** extra clerical hours
- In every cluster -** a full-time administrative and finance assistant
- In groups of clusters -** senior level administrative and finance officer
- In each division -** a higher level administrative and finance officer, with professional finance qualifications
- In every school -** full training for management and office staff

- freeing head teachers to concentrate on the educational management aspects of DMR

Delegated Management of Resources - DMR

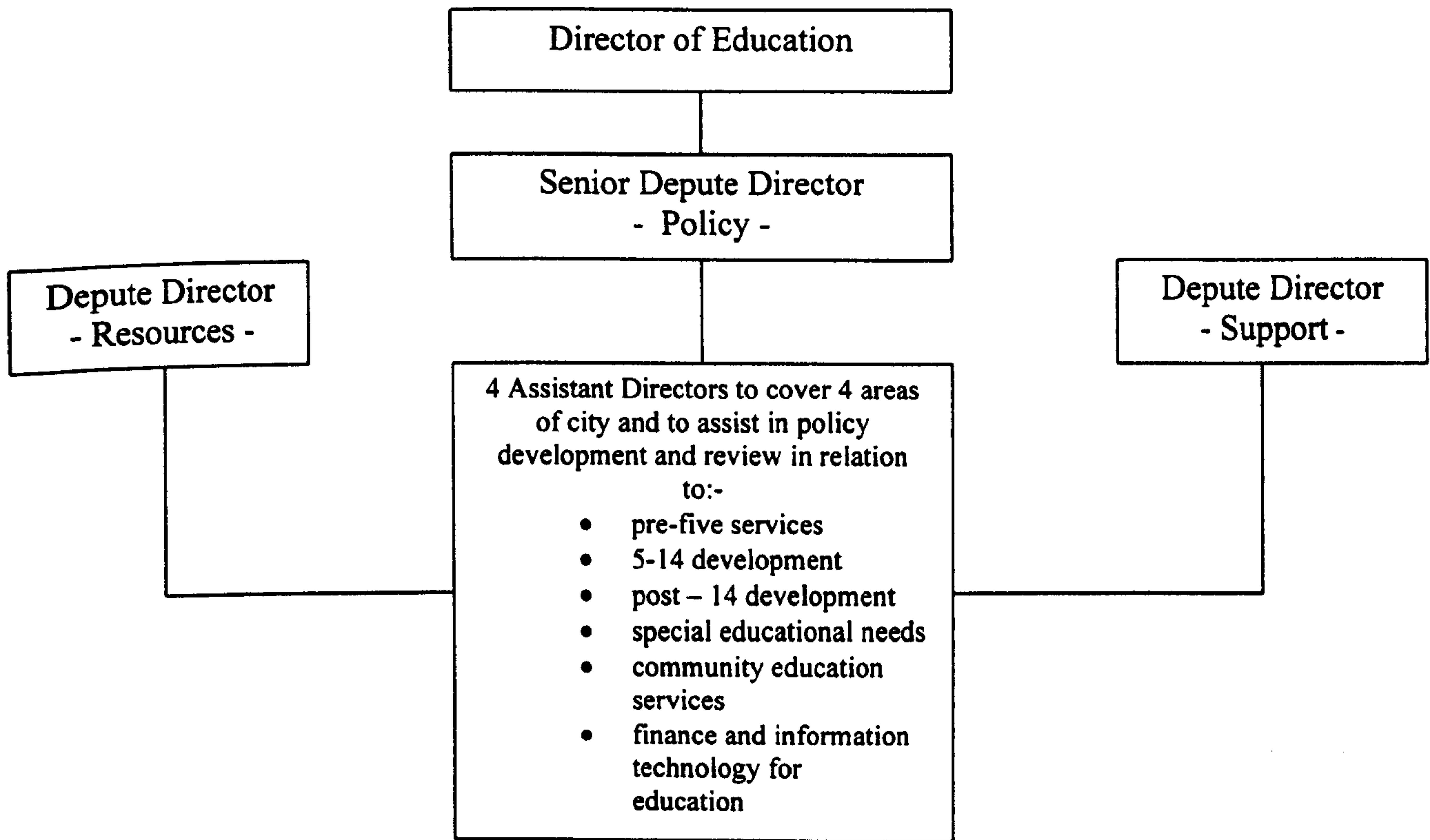


Appendix N: Who's who in Aberdeenshire Education

NAME	POST
Michael White	Director of Education
Bruce Robertson	Head of Division (Central)
Hamish Vernal	Head of Division (North)
Brian Walker	Head of Division (South)
Senior Education Officers	
Catherine Nikodem	Senior Education Officer (Central)
Stephen Shaw	Senior Education Officer (Central)
Gordon Bulloch	Senior Education Officer (North)
Anne McArthur	Senior Education Officer (North)
Betty McGill	Senior Education Officer (South)
Vacancy	Senior Education Officer (South)
Senior Education Officers (Specialist)	
Jim Banks	Senior Education Officer (Support for Learning/Principal Psychologist)
Thelma Birnie	Senior Education Officer (Evaluation Review & Development)
Ian Stephen	Senior Education Officer (Central Support Services)
John Troup	Senior Education Officer (Community Development)
Education Officers	
Alex Bain	Education Officer (Finance/Admin North)
Aileen Barclay	Education Officer (Support for Learners)
Christine Boylan	Education Officer (Staffing)
Anne Darling	Education (Expressive Arts)
Lloyd Davies	Education Officer (PD&R)
Edwin Duncan	Education Officer (Finance/Admin Central)
Peter Edwards	Education Officer (PD&R)
Hazel Hall	Education Officer (Finance/Admin South)
Norman Hawkins	Education Officer (European Development)
Vaughan Jennings	Education Officer (Support to Pupils)
Mike Ramsay	Education Officer (Staff Development) <i>Seconded</i>
Terry Reid	Education Officer (Lifelong Learning)
Moyra Stewart	Education Officer (Support for Learners)
Maitland Wilson	Education Officer (Education Support)
Robert Yule	Education Officer (Sports)

Source: Aberdeenshire Council Department of Education

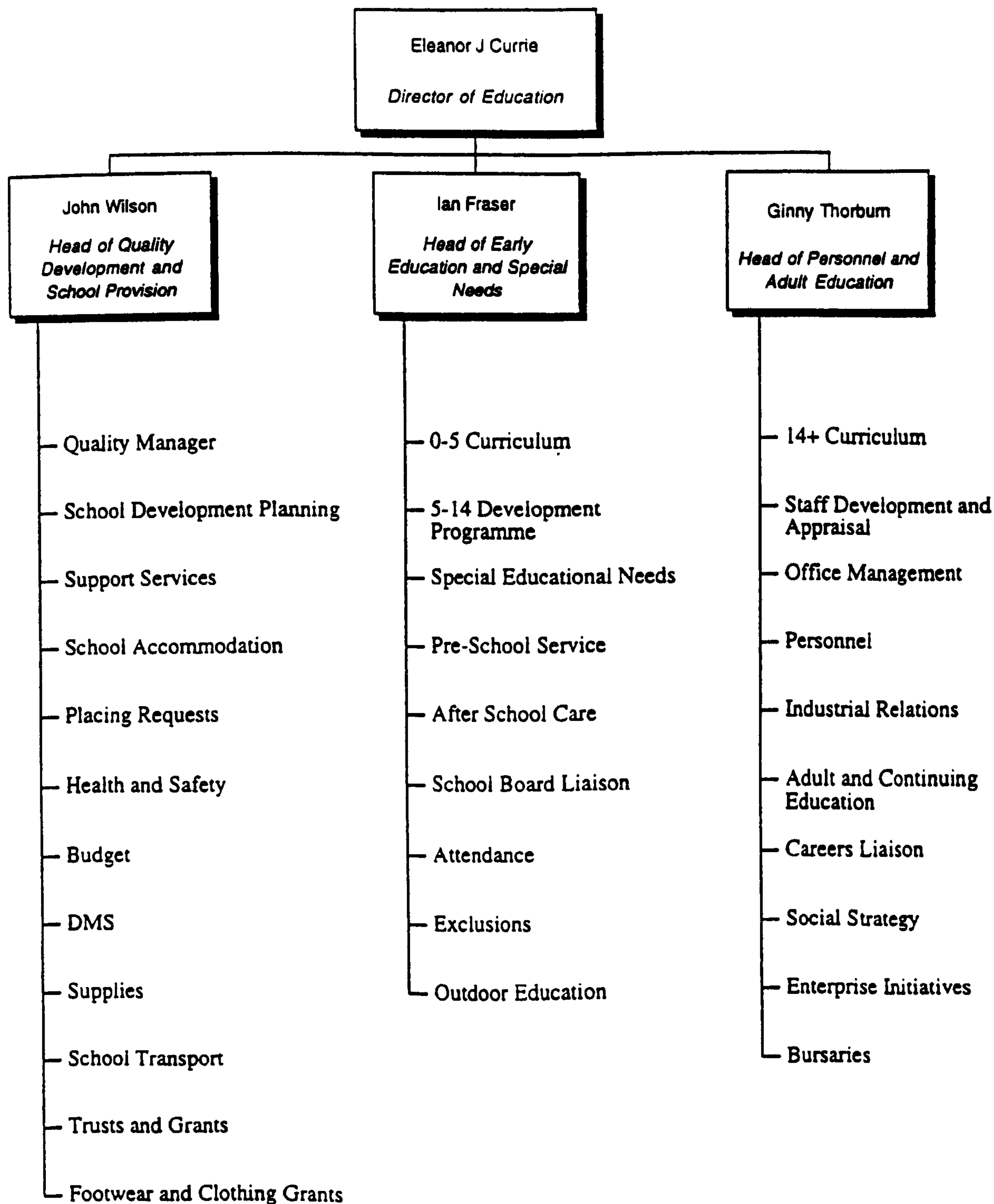
Appendix O: City of Glasgow Department of Education



Source: City of Glasgow Department of Education 1997

Appendix P: East Renfrewshire - Structure of EA

East Renfrewshire Council : Education Department Directorate Structure and Remit Responsibilities



Source: East Renfrewshire Education Department 1996.

Each Head of Service also has a pastoral role in relation to the development of the education service in a local area prescribed by the director

Appendix Q: Highland Council: Education Service - Senior Management Team

CORE

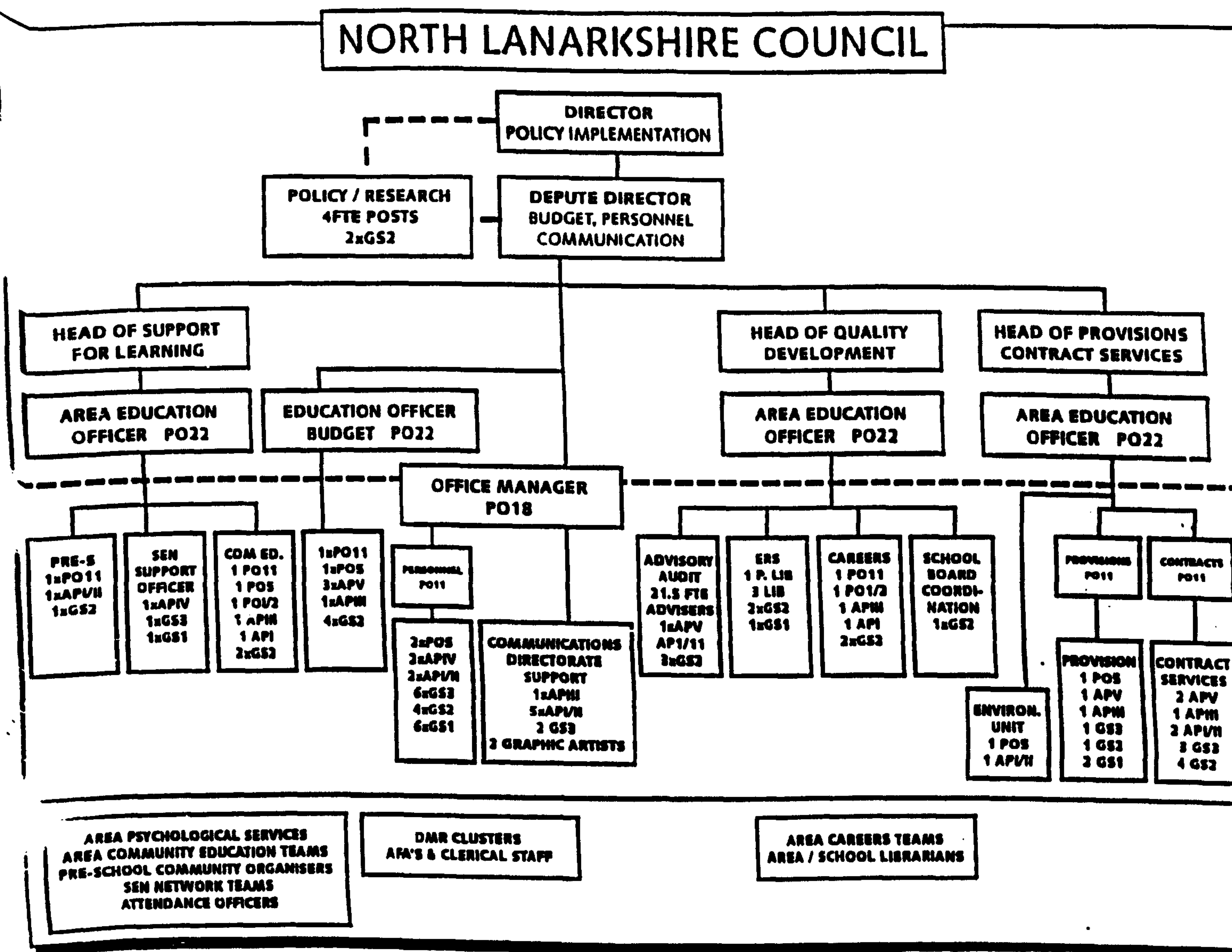
Director of Education	- ALLAN GILCHRIST	(Director of Education, Highland Regional Council)
Head of School And Curriculum Development	- JOHN G. FINDLAY	(Depute Director of Education, Highland Regional Council)
Head of Resources and Support Services	- JAMES STEVENSON	(Depute Director of Education, Highland Regional Council)
Head of Community and Extended Education	- HUGH FRASER	(Assistant Divisional Education Officer, Inverness Division, HRC)
Finance Manager	- ROBERT MACKINNON	

AREA

Education Manager - Badenoch & Strathspey/Nairn	- MURDO GILLES	(Assistant Divisional Education Officer, Inverness Division, HRC)
Caithness	- JOHN EDGAR	(Divisional Education Officer, Inverness Division, HRC)
Inverness	- NEIL MURRAY	(Divisional Education Officer Inverness Division, HRC)
	- JOHN RITCHIE	(Assistant Manager, TVEI/Staff Development Co-ordinator, HRC)
Lochaber	- HECTOR ROBERTSON	(Secondary Co-Ordinator, Orkney)
Ross & Cromarty	- DONALD MACDONALD	(Assitant Divisional Education Officer, Ross & Cromarty Division, HRC)
Skye & Lochalsh	- ANNETTE SHARLAND	(Regional Primary Adviser, HRC)
Sutherland	- JOHN METCALFE	(Divisional Education Officer, Sutherland Division, HRC)

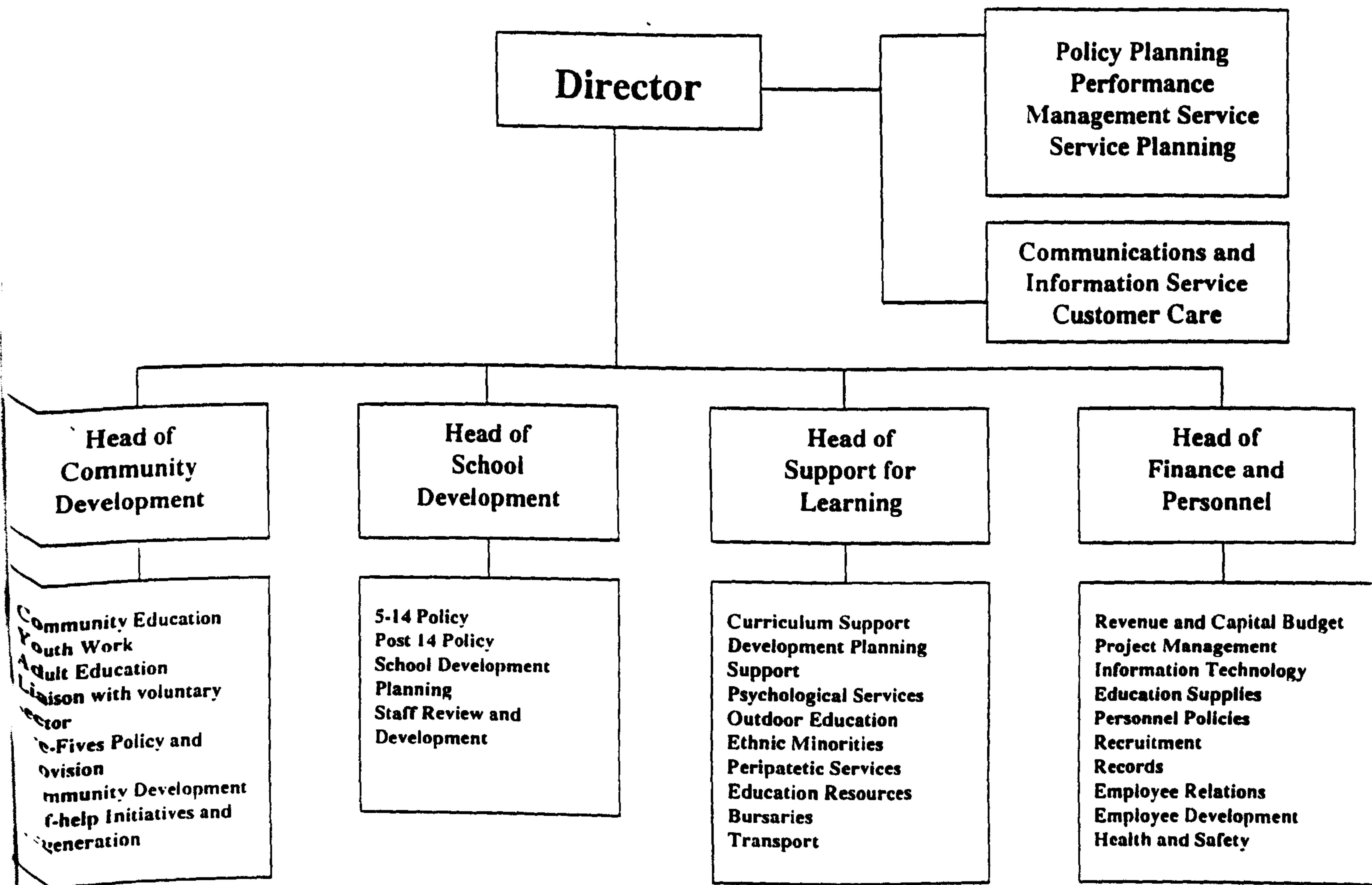
Source: Highland Council Education Department 1997

Appendix R: North Lanarkshire - Structure of EA



Source: North Lanarkshire Education Department 1996.

Appendix S: South Lanarkshire - Structure of EA



Source: South Lanarkshire Education Department 1996.

Appendix T: Perceived Losses For Education Post- Reorganisation

Area of Loss	Specific Issues	Mentioned By Education Officer	Mentioned By Head Teacher
Personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - in general - loss of advisors - loss of educational psychologists - loss of teaching posts - loss of ancillary posts - lack of experience amongst councillors - lack of experience amongst Officers 	<p>AEO1, COGEO1 HEO1, AEO1, COGEO1, EREO2</p> <p>HEO1</p> <p>HEO1</p> <p>COAEO2, EREO2, SLEO1</p>	<p>HSS2, APS1, AP2 HSS2, APS1, SLPS1, COASS1, A&BSS1 HSS2</p> <p>ASS3, APS2 ASS3, ASS1, A&BPS1, NLSS1 APS1</p> <p>APS1, COAPS1, A&BSS1, SLSS1</p>
Loss of Support Functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reduced support for SEN - loss of support for curriculum - reduced monitoring - support for deprivation 	<p>COGEO1</p>	<p>HSS2, APS1, SLPS1 ASS1</p> <p>ASS1, APS2 COGPS1</p>
Provision & Nature of Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No new nurseries - No swimming - Library service - Transport - Closure of outdoor centres - Closure of Community Centres - Pre- Fives - Reduced quantity & quality of school meals - School closure - Free music tuition 	<p>AEO1 AEO1</p> <p>AEO1, COGEO1 AEO1, COGEO1 COGEO1 EREO3</p> <p>A&BEO1, COGEO1</p> <p>EREO3, NLEO1</p>	<p>ASS1 APS1 COASS1</p> <p>APS1</p> <p>ASS1, COAPS1, NLSS1</p>

Compared to Regional EA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - no longer meet with large range of colleagues - loss of strategic capacity - less efficient structure - worse communication - loss of Strathclyde Regional Council 		COAPS1, SLPS1 A&BPS1, A&BSS1, SLPS1 SLSS1 SLPS1 A&BPS1, NLSS1, SLPS1
Nature of New EA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - too rural - levels of deprivation - tax base is too small 	A&BEO1 COGEO1 COGEO1	A&BSS1
Policies of new EA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - increased centralisation - feeling of insecurity/ policy gap 		A&BSS1, A&BPS1 SLSS1, SLPS1

Appendix U: Key Roles for EA Identified in Fieldwork

<i>Role</i>	<i>Related Issues</i>	<i>Proposed by Education Officer</i>	<i>Proposed by Secondary HT</i>	<i>Proposed by Primary HT</i>
SERVICE PROVISION	provide and ensure statutory services		SRCSS1 & 5	
	provide support services		SRCSS1, 2 & 3, GRCSS4	
	Advisory and development service		SRCSS1 & 2, GRCSS2 & 4, HRCSS2 &	HRCPS1 & 2
	SEN		SRCSS1 & 2, GRCSS1 & 4, HRCSS2 & 3	SRCPS6
	Psychological services		GRCSS4, HRCSS2 & 3	SRCPS6, GRCPS2 & 3, HRCPS1 & 2
	Insurance services	SRCEO2	SRCSS5	
	Legal services	SRCEO2	SRCSS4	
	Technical/ I.T. services		GRCSS1 & 4	SRCPS3 & 6
	Transport services		SRCSS4, GRCSS4, HRCSS3	SRCPS6, GRCPS2 & 4
	Building services		SRCSS1, HRCSS3	SRCPS1 & 3
	Library service			GRCPS4, SRCPS1 & 3
	Careers service		GRCSS4	GRCPS2 & 4
	Janitorial services		GRCSS4	
	Meals			GRCPS3
	Cleaning			HRCPS1
				HRCPS1

STRATEGIC	Determining policies and priorities	SRCEO4, HRCEO1		GRCPS3
	Distributing resources accordingly and justly	SRCEO4, HRCEO1	HRCSS2	
	Specifying standards and quality	SRCEO4		SRCPS4
	Strategic and overview functions	GRCEO2	SRCSS4 & 5	GRCPS4
	Overall and strategic planning		HRCSS2 & 3	
	'Enabling' EA	SRCEO4, HRCEO1		
	Ensuring statutory requirements		GRCSS1	
	Disseminating new policies			SRCPS3
	Adapting national policy to local setting		GRCSS2	
	Corporate issues	SRCEO4		
	Curriculum matters	HRCEO3	SRCSS4, HRCSS2	SRCPS6, GRCPS2
	Provision of buildings		SRCSS1, HRCSS3	SRCPS1 & 3, GRCPS4
	School closure	SRCEO1		
	Defining 'catchment areas'		HRCSS3	
	Co-ordinating educational provision, eg Regional orchestra		GRCSS1	
	Health & safety			SRCPS3
	Develop DSM			GRCPS4

SUPPORTER	provision of support services		SRCSS1, 2 & 3, GRCSS4	
	IT & admin staff for DSM	SRCEO1 & 3		SRCPS6, GRCPS2 & 4, HRCPS2 & 3
	Support for education & teachers			SRCPS5 & 6, GRCPS2 & 4
	Provision of 'back-up' when necessary	HRCEO1		
	Financial 'safety-net'			HRCPS1
	Support for buildings		SRCSS1, GRCSS1	
	'Layers of support'			
Provision of Divisional/ Area office	GRCEO2		HRCPS1 & 3	
STAFFING AGENCY	payment of salaries	SRCEO1		
	'Staff College'- development, training	SRCEO4	SRCSS1	SRCPS6
	personnel function		SRCSS2 & 4	
	protecting staff & standards		GRCSS1	SRCPS4
MONITOR	Ensure school meets statutory obligations		SRCSS4 & 5, GRCSS1 & 3	
	Ensuring accountability	SRCEO2	SRCSS4	
	Monitoring school's use of finance	SRCEO3	GRCSS3	
	Monitoring educational aspects/ quality assurance	SRCEO3	GRCSS2 & 4, HRCSS2 & 3	GRCPS3

ADVOCATE/ OMBUDSMAN	<p>Represent schools and act as counter-balance to Scottish Office</p> <p>Defend education service to other LA services</p> <p>Inform local politicians about education</p> <p>Promote needs of <u>Scottish</u> education</p> <p>Raise profile of education in public</p> <p>Promote parental 'responsibilities' not simply 'rights'</p> <p>Investigate parental complaints against school</p>	<p>SRCEO1</p>	<p>SRCSS2</p> <p>SRCSS4</p>	<p>SRCPS3, HRCPS3</p> <p>SRCPS3, GRCPS3, HRCPS3</p> <p>SRCPS6</p> <p>SRCPS5</p> <p>SRCPS6, HRCPS3</p>
LEADER	<p>eg in allocation of resources</p> <p>Visionary leadership & proactive management</p> <p>Develop education service</p> <p>Develop DSM</p>	<p>SRCEO1, GRCEO4</p> <p>GRCEO4</p>	<p>HRCSS1</p>	<p>SRCPS2 & 3, GRCPS3</p> <p>GRCPS4</p>
BANKER	<p>budget provision</p> <p>creation of a 'budget unit'</p> <p>allocating & monitoring resources</p>	<p>SRCEO3</p> <p>SRCEO1, GRCEO4, HRCEO1</p>	<p>SRCSS1 & 4</p> <p>GRCSS3</p>	<p>SRCPS1, 4 & 6</p>

FACILITATOR	encourage co-operation between schools & teachers	SRCEO1	GRCSS2, 3 & 4	
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